40TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION

THE EVIL DEAD™

MARK
VERHEIDEN

JOHN
BOLTON

THE EVIL DEAD

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Based on the characters created by Sam and Ivan Raimi.

Writer **MARK VERHEIDEN**

Artist **JOHN BOLTON**

Letters **STEVE DUTRO**

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THE EVIL DEAD
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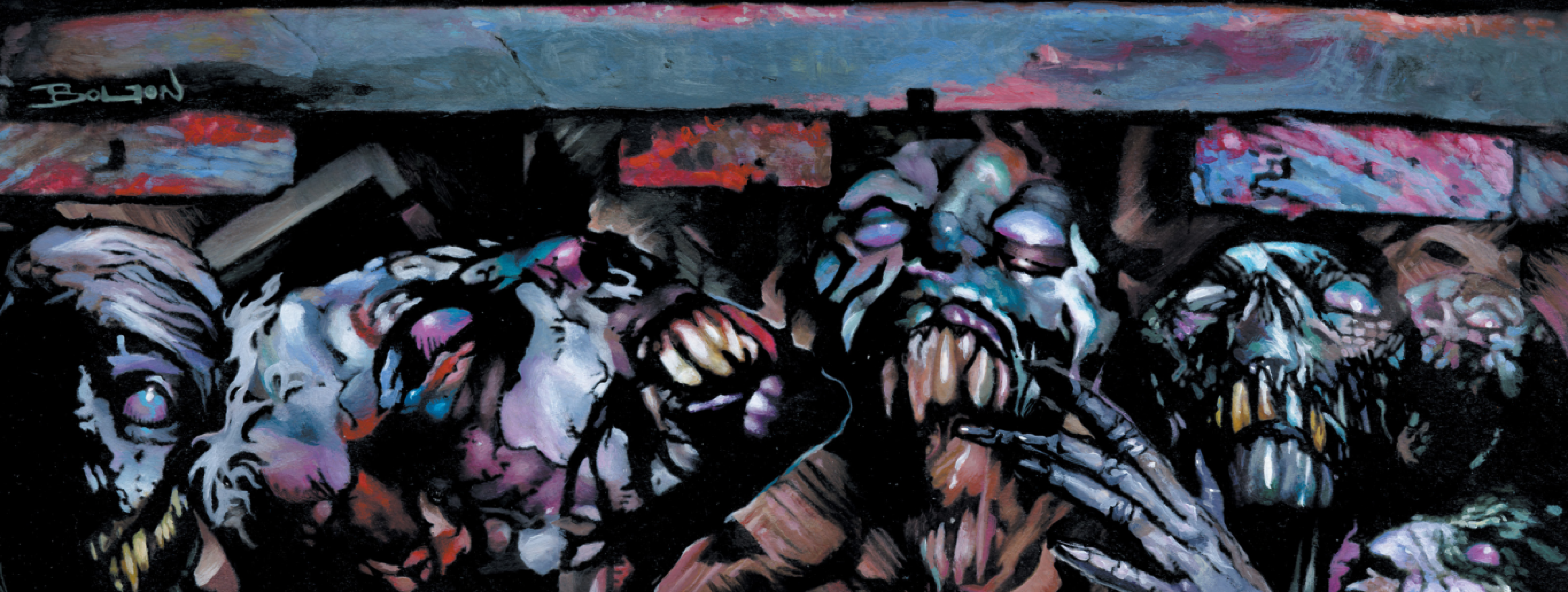
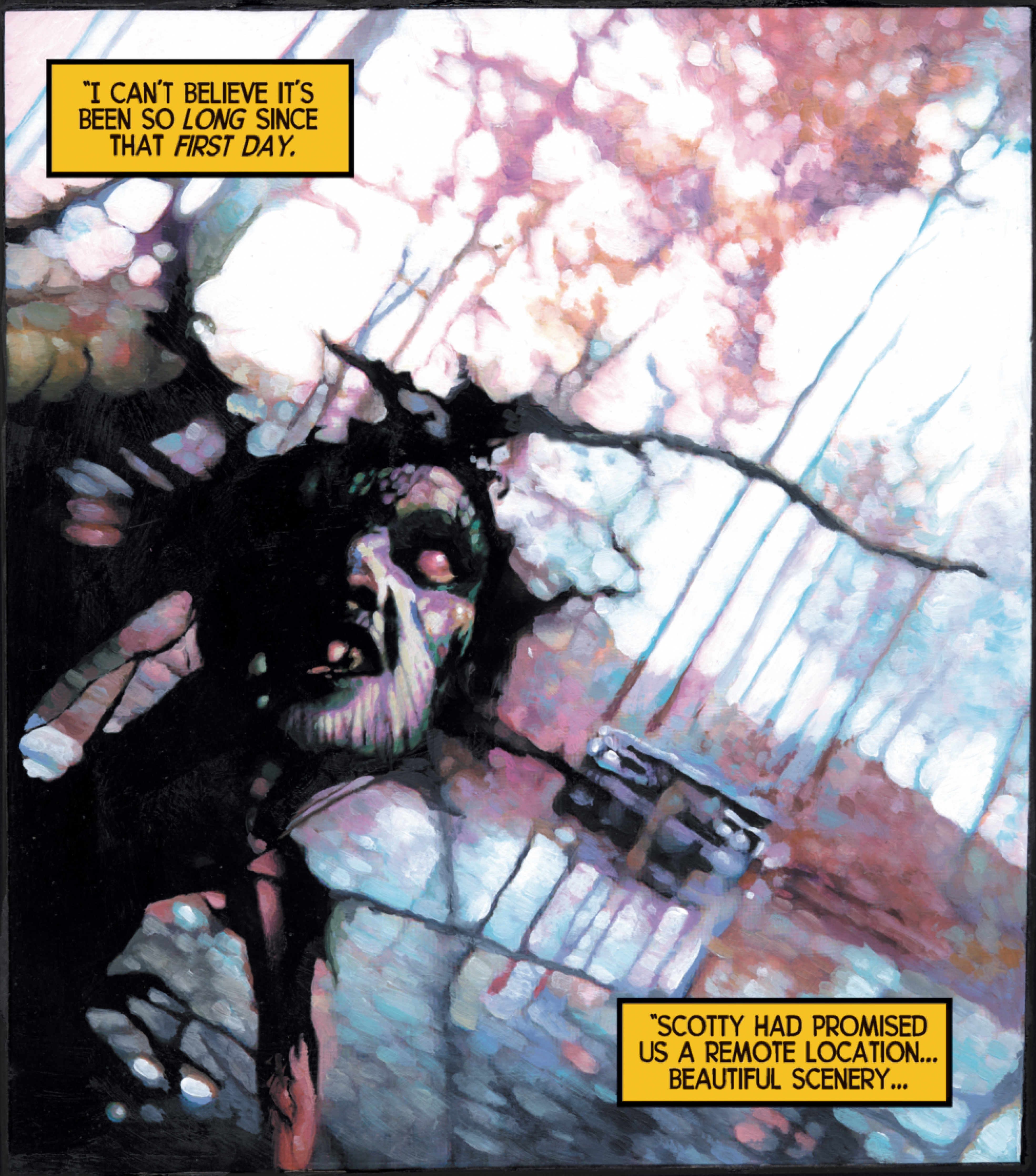
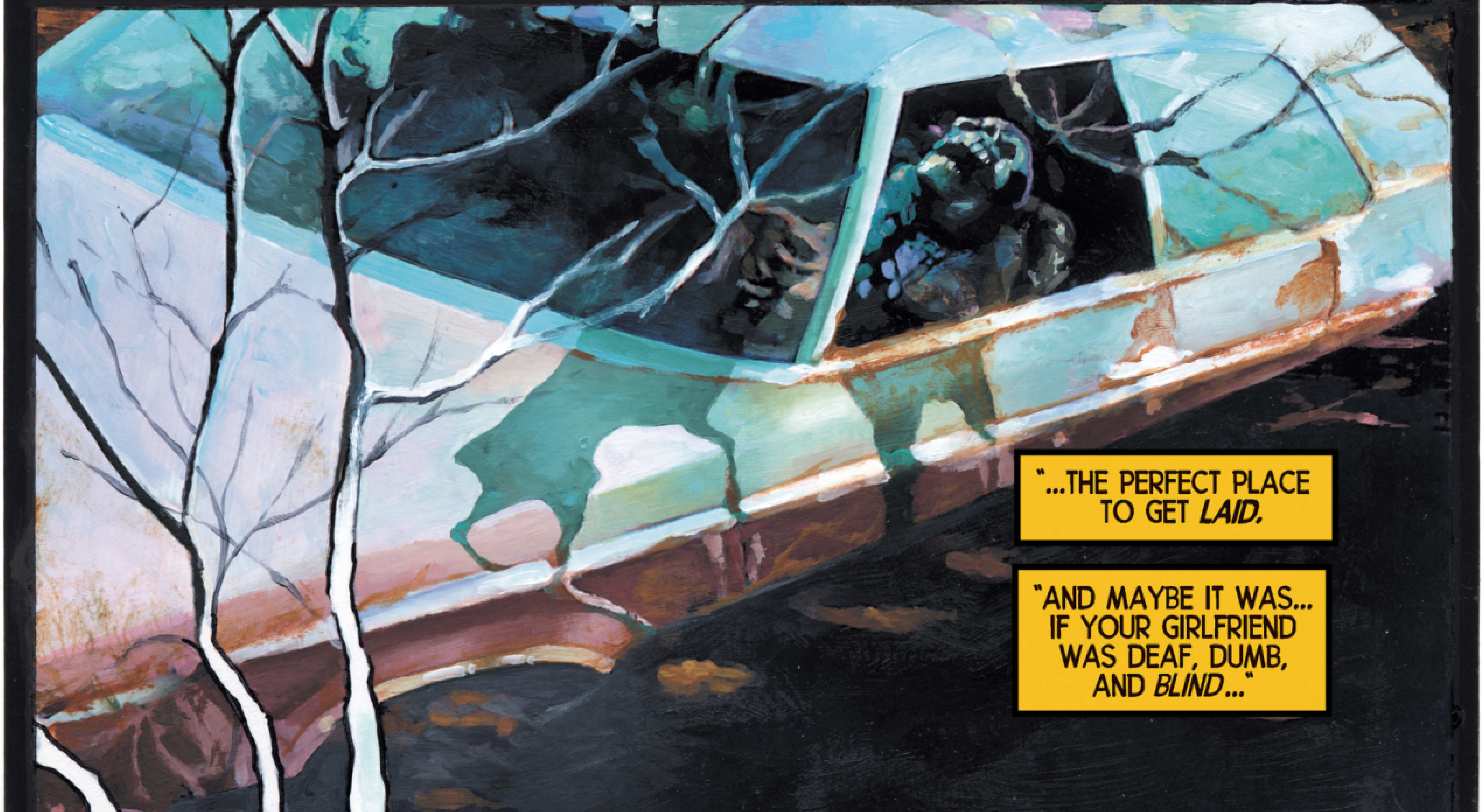
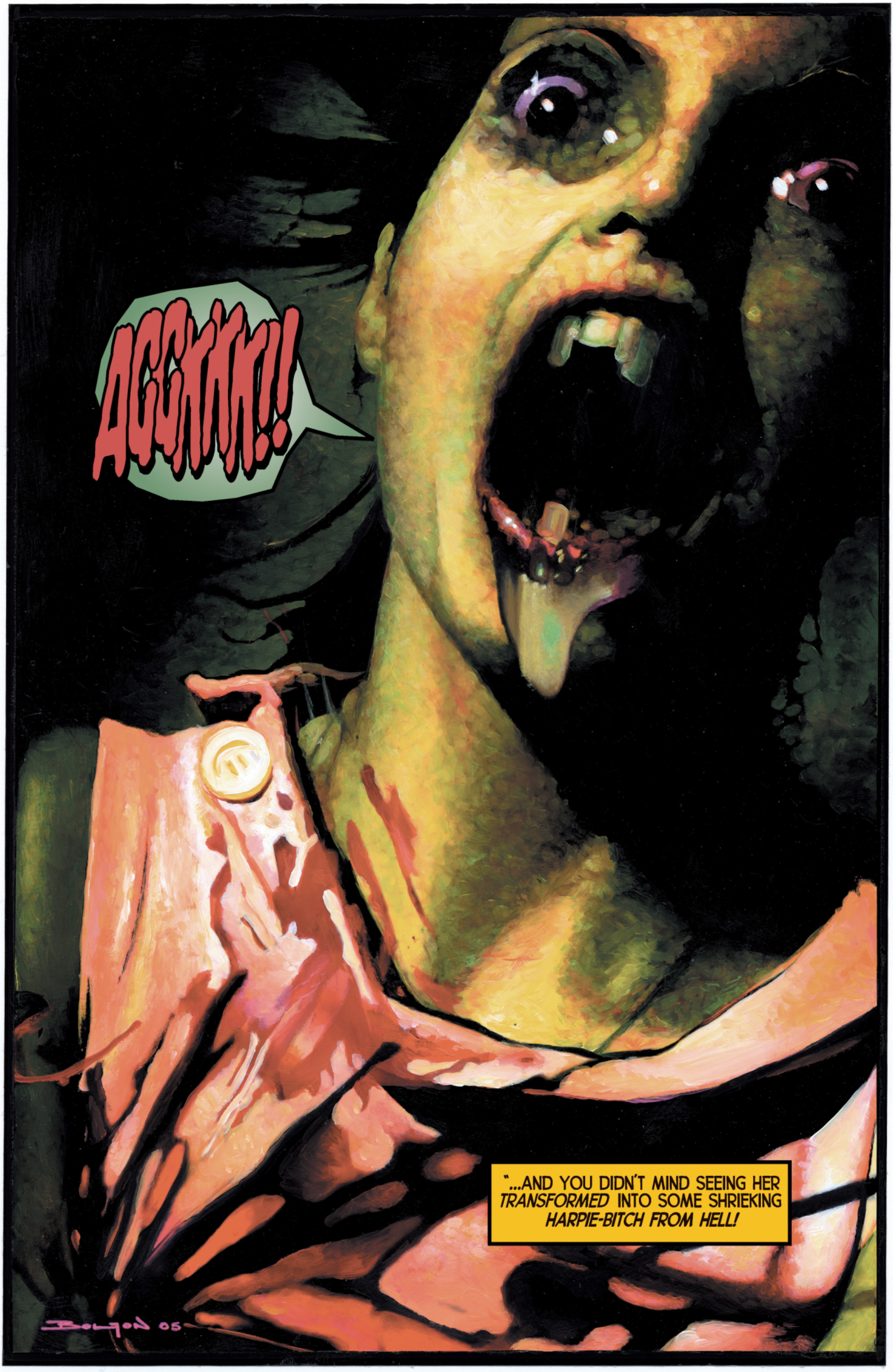
CHAPTER ONE

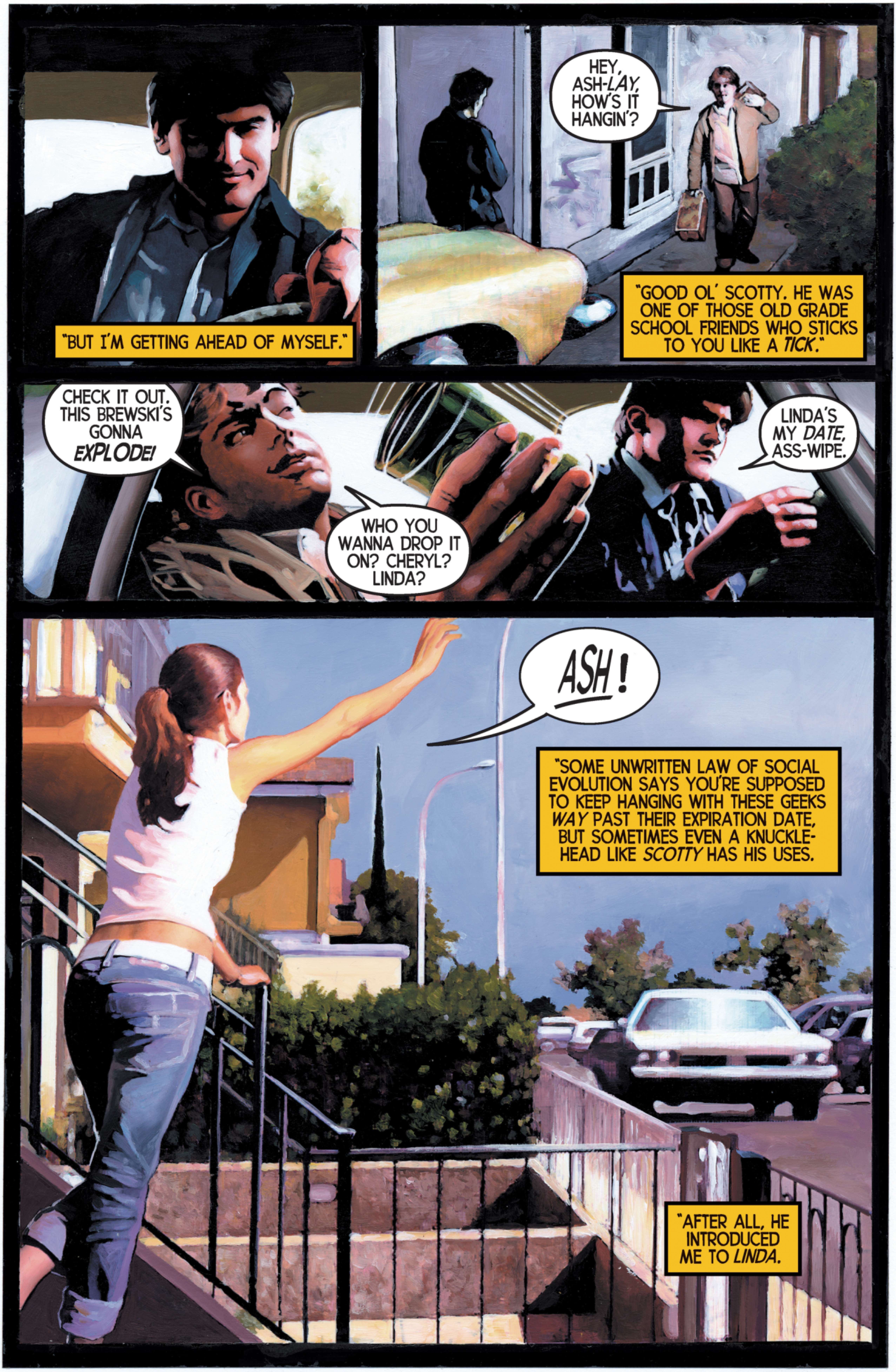
“CRAZY AS IT SOUNDS *NOW*,
I COULDN’T WAIT TO GET TO THE CABIN . . . ”

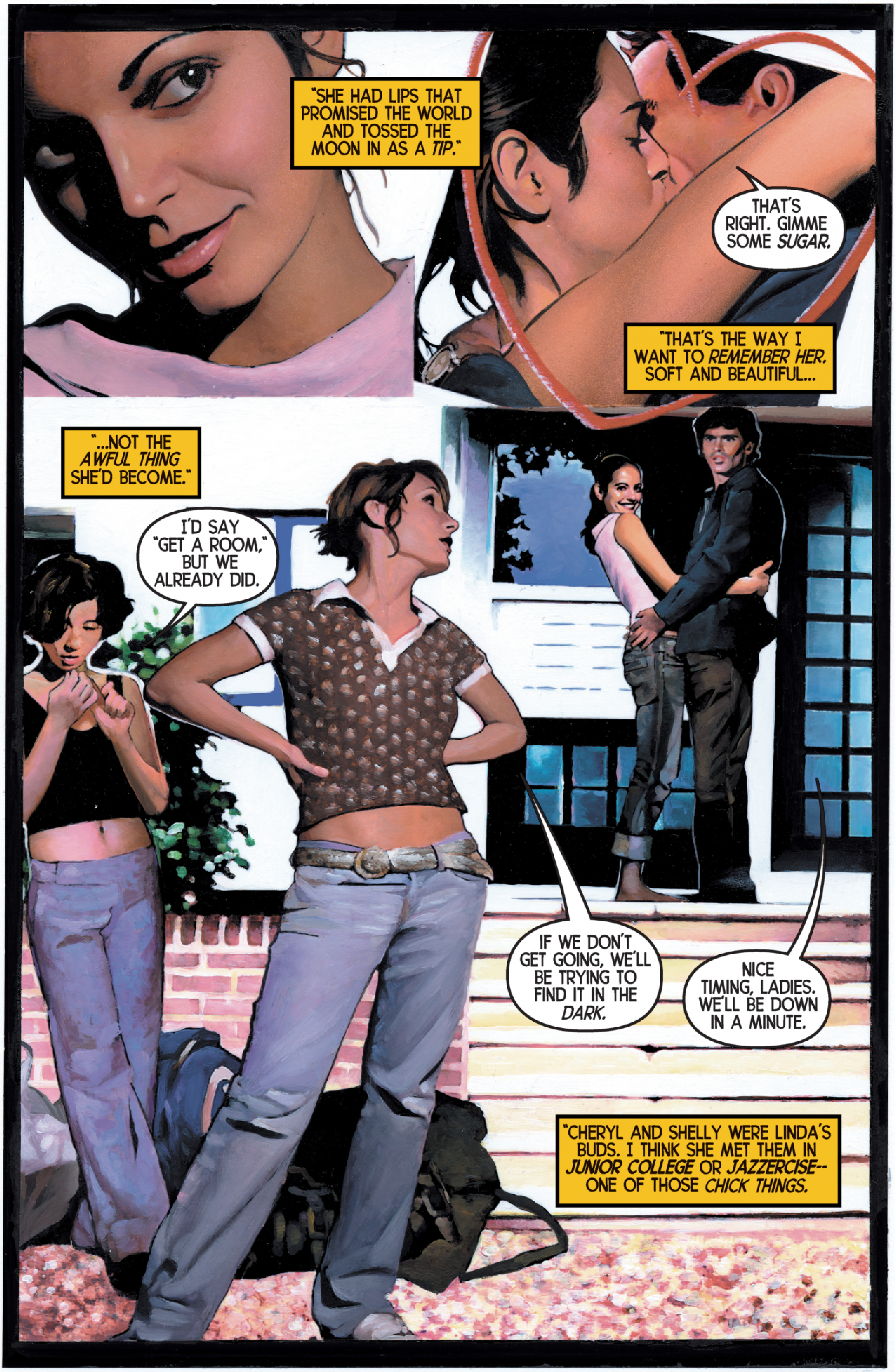


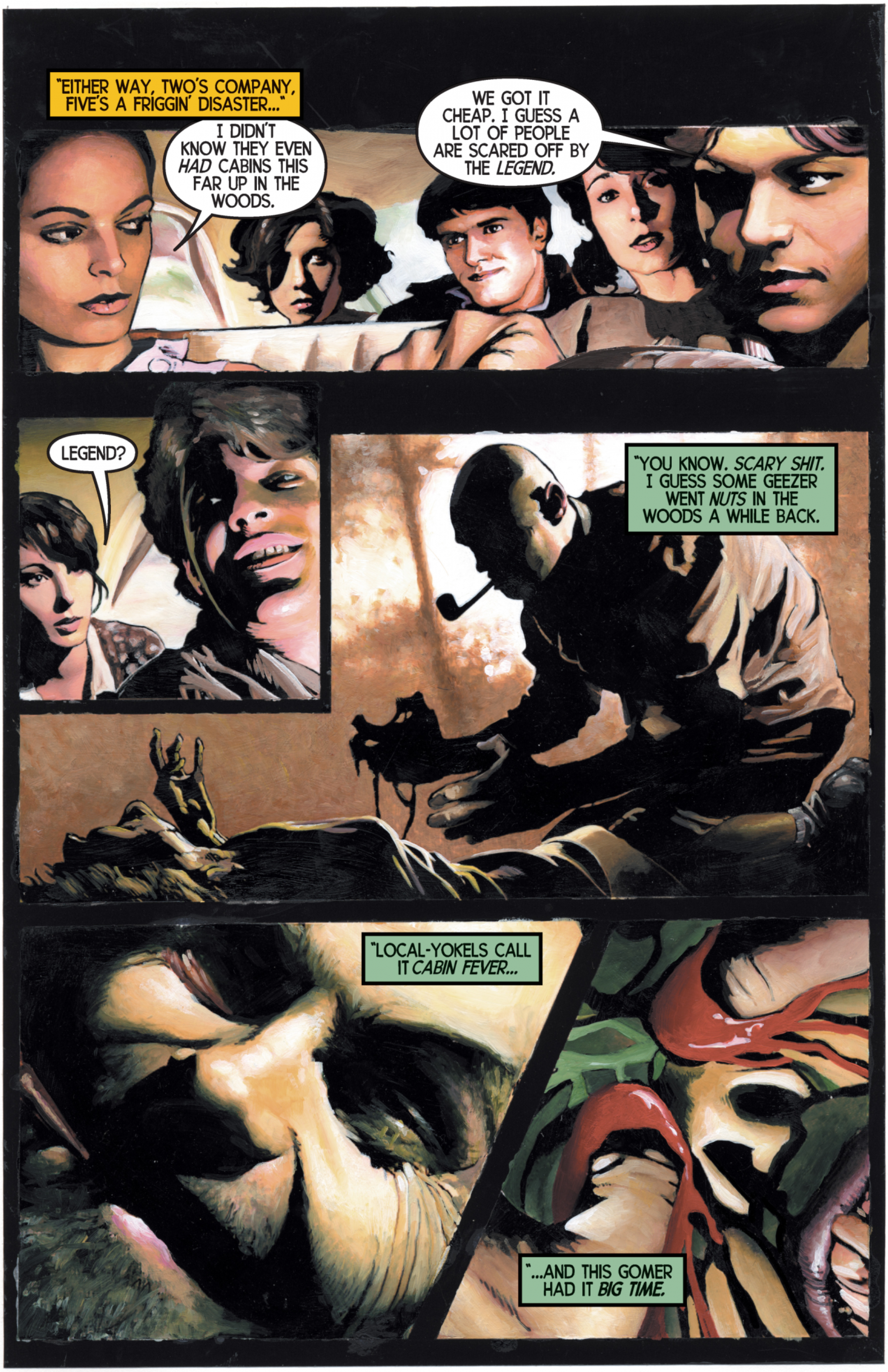

"I CAN'T BELIEVE IT'S BEEN SO *LONG* SINCE THAT *FIRST DAY.*
"SCOTTY HAD PROMISED US A REMOTE LOCATION... BEAUTIFUL SCENERY...

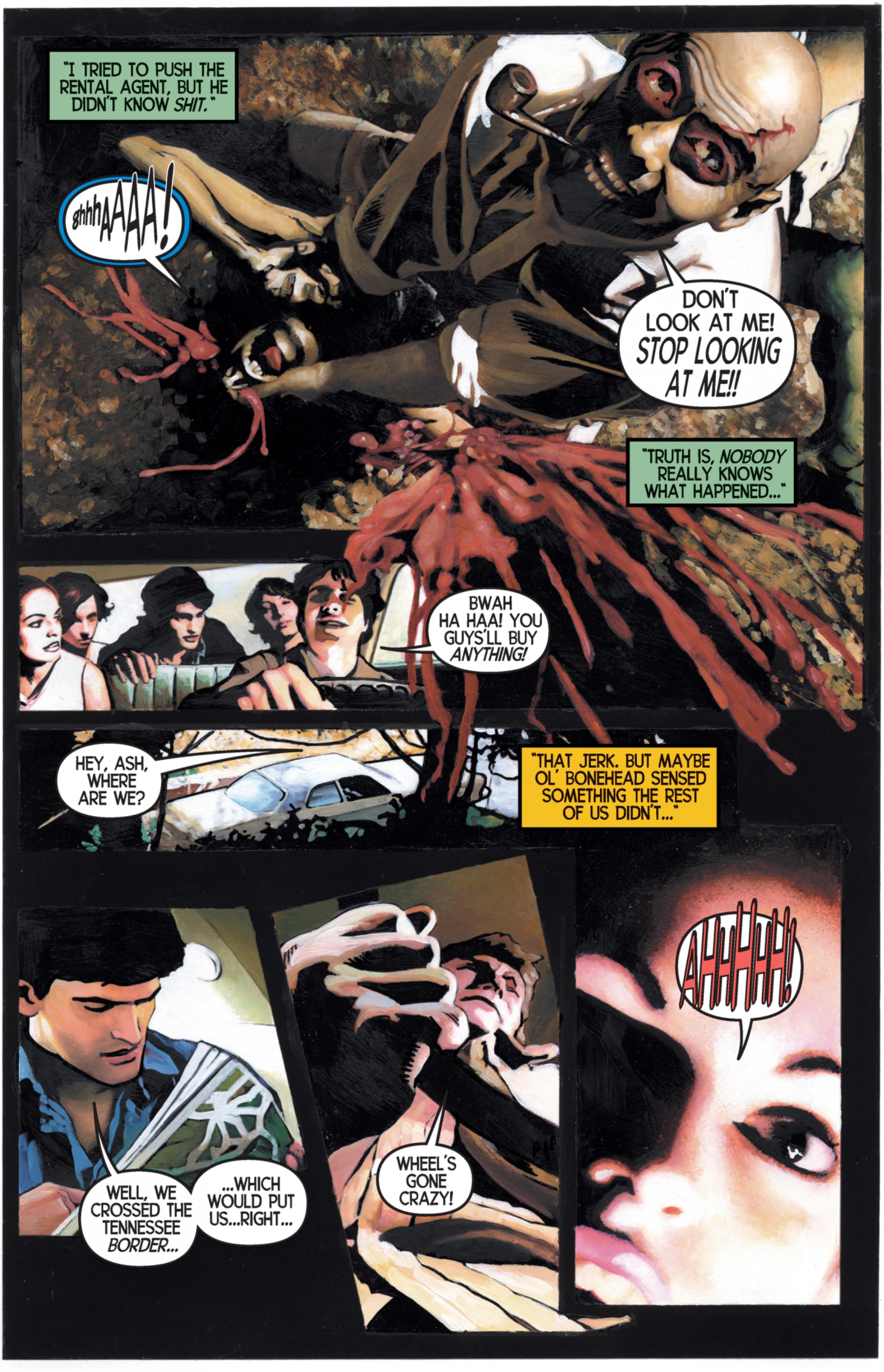

"...THE PERFECT PLACE TO GET *LAID.*
"AND MAYBE IT WAS... IF YOUR GIRLFRIEND WAS DEAF, DUMB, AND *BLIND*..."

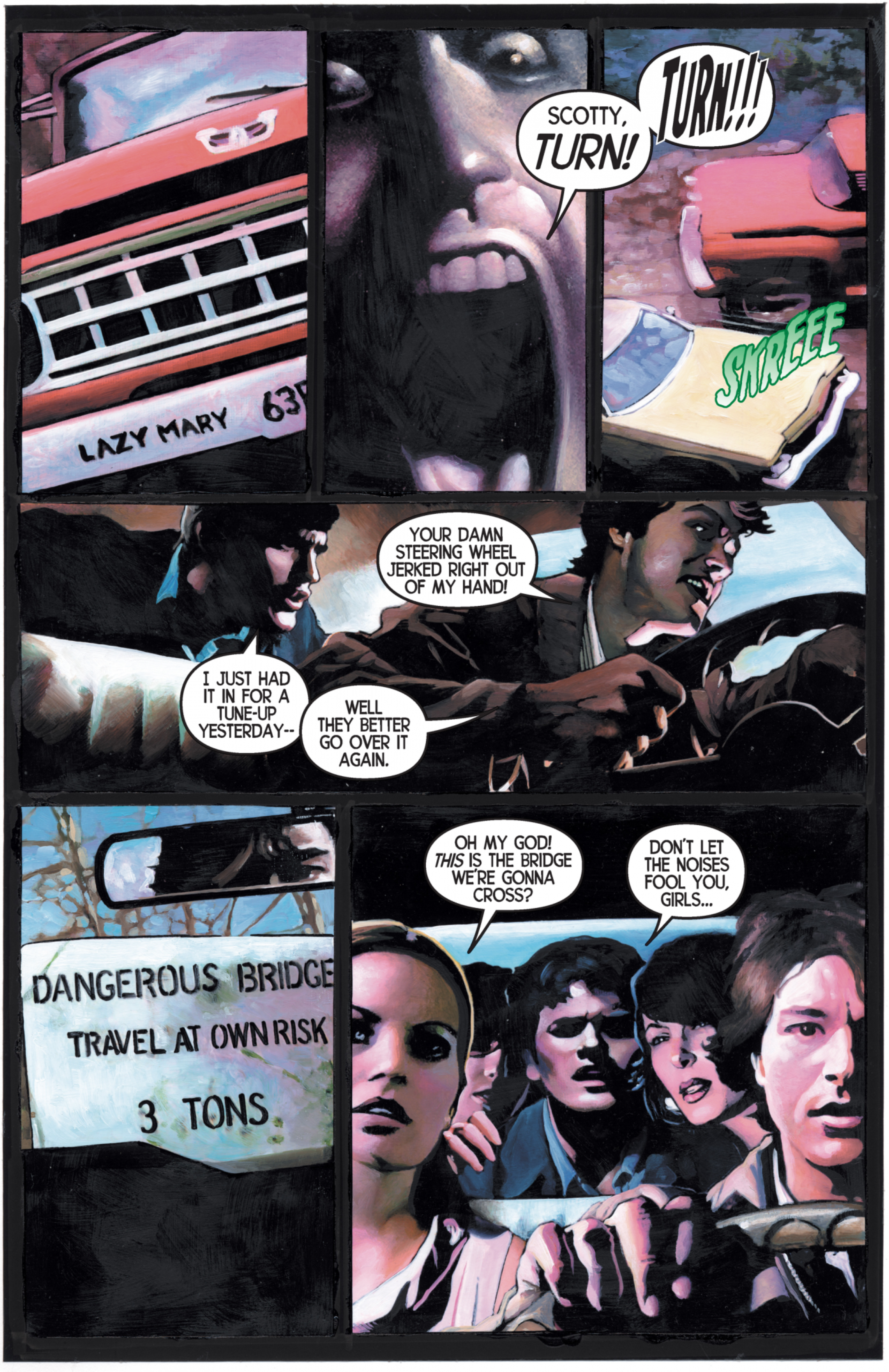

AGGKKK!!
"...AND YOU DIDN'T MIND SEEING HER *TRANSFORMED* INTO SOME SHRIEKING *HARPIE-BITCH FROM HELL!*
BOLTON 05

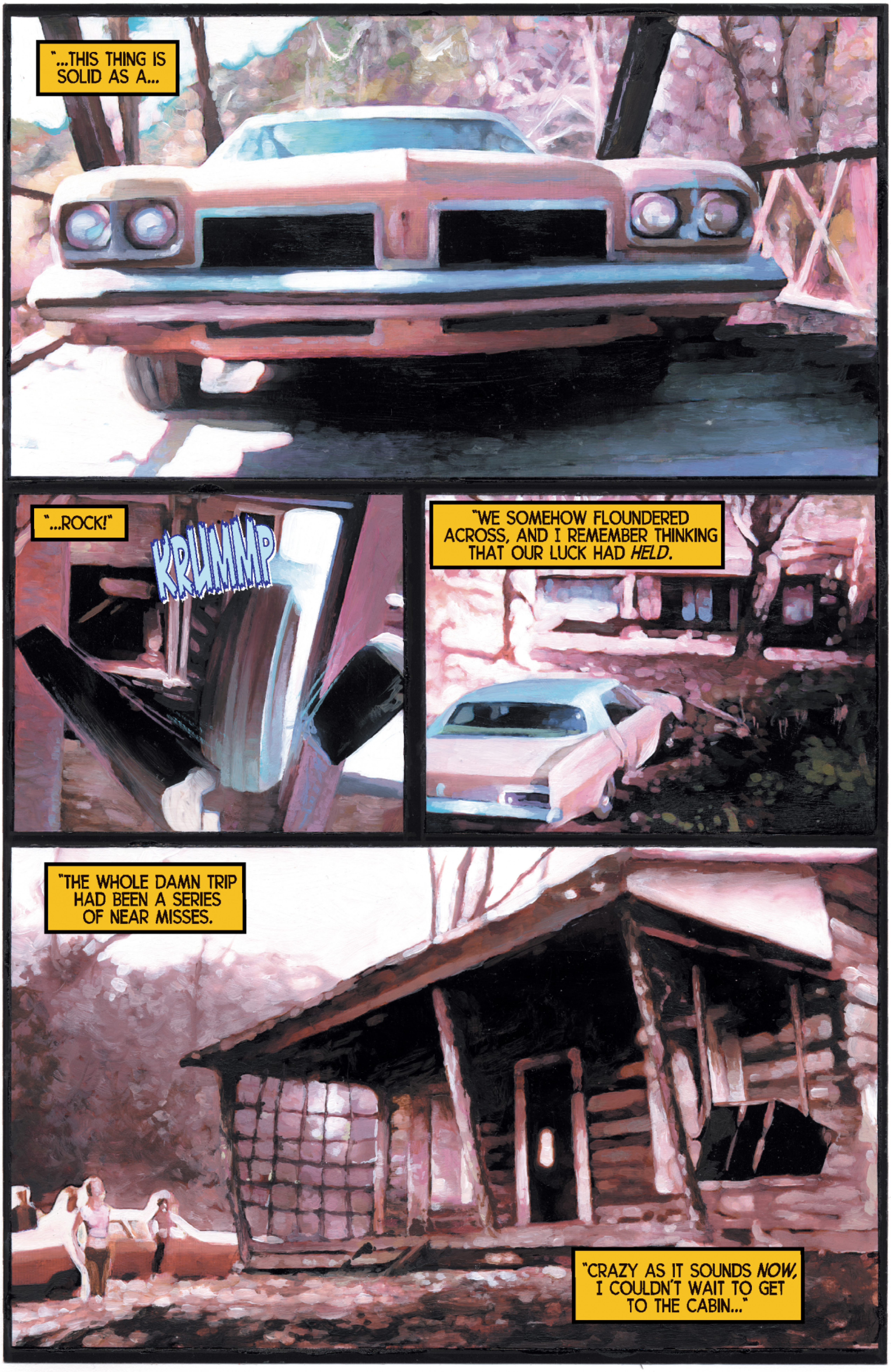

"BUT I'M GETTING AHEAD OF MYSELF."
HEY, ASH-*LAY*, HOW'S IT HANGIN'?
"GOOD OL' SCOTTY. HE WAS ONE OF THOSE OLD GRADE SCHOOL FRIENDS WHO STICKS TO YOU LIKE A *TICK*."
CHECK IT OUT. THIS BREWSKI'S GONNA ***EXPLODE!***
WHO YOU WANNA DROP IT ON? CHERYL? LINDA?
LINDA'S MY *DATE*, ASS-WIPE.
ASH!
"SOME UNWRITTEN LAW OF SOCIAL EVOLUTION SAYS YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO KEEP HANGING WITH THESE GEEKS *WAY* PAST THEIR EXPIRATION DATE, BUT SOMETIMES EVEN A KNUCKLEHEAD LIKE *SCOTTY* HAS HIS USES.
"AFTER ALL, HE INTRODUCED ME TO *LINDA*.

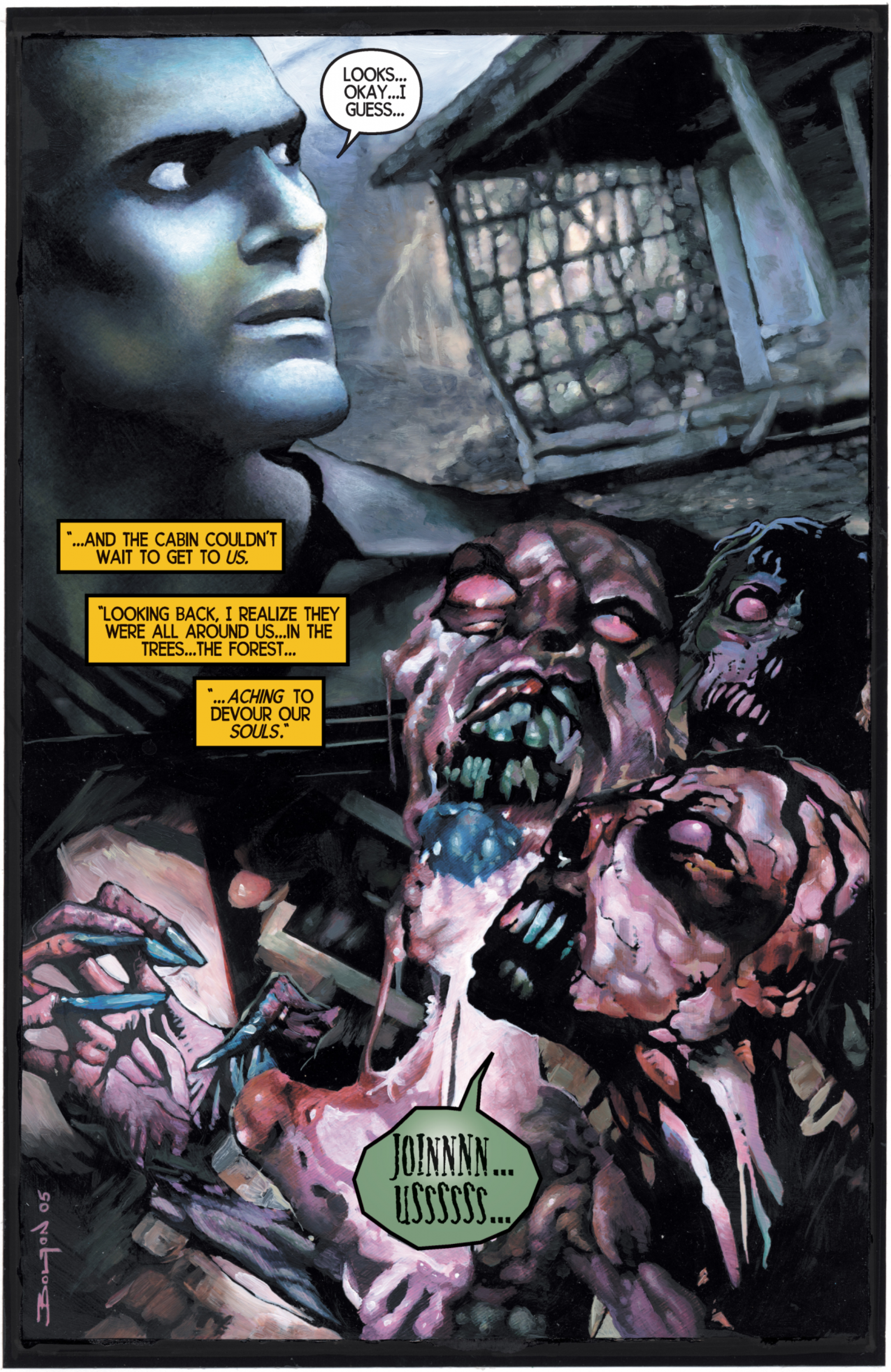

"SHE HAD LIPS THAT PROMISED THE WORLD AND TOSSED THE MOON IN AS A *TIP*."
THAT'S RIGHT. GIMME SOME *SUGAR*.
"THAT'S THE WAY I WANT TO *REMEMBER HER*. SOFT AND BEAUTIFUL...
"...NOT THE *AWFUL THING* SHE'D BECOME."
I'D SAY "GET A ROOM," BUT WE ALREADY DID.
IF WE DON'T GET GOING, WE'LL BE TRYING TO FIND IT IN THE *DARK*.
NICE TIMING, LADIES. WE'LL BE DOWN IN A MINUTE.
"CHERYL AND SHELLY WERE LINDA'S BUDS. I THINK SHE MET THEM IN *JUNIOR COLLEGE* OR *JAZZERCISE*-- ONE OF THOSE *CHICK THINGS*.

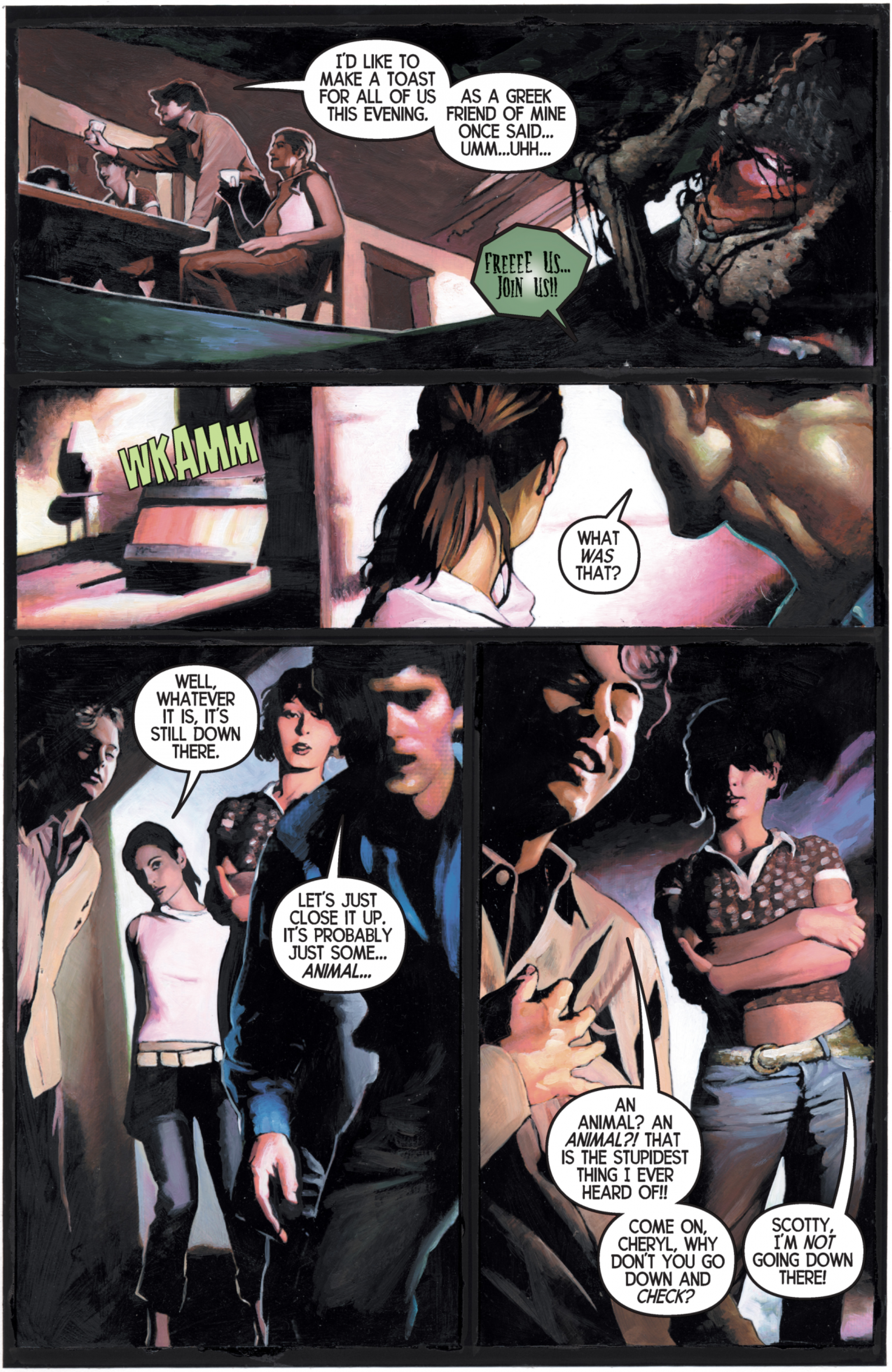

"EITHER WAY, TWO'S COMPANY, FIVE'S A FRIGGIN' DISASTER..."
I DIDN'T KNOW THEY EVEN *HAD* CABINS THIS FAR UP IN THE WOODS.
WE GOT IT CHEAP. I GUESS A LOT OF PEOPLE ARE SCARED OFF BY THE *LEGEND.*
LEGEND?
"YOU KNOW. *SCARY SHIT.* I GUESS SOME GEEZER WENT *NUTS* IN THE WOODS A WHILE BACK.
"LOCAL-YOKELS CALL IT *CABIN FEVER...*
"...AND THIS GOMER HAD IT *BIG TIME.*

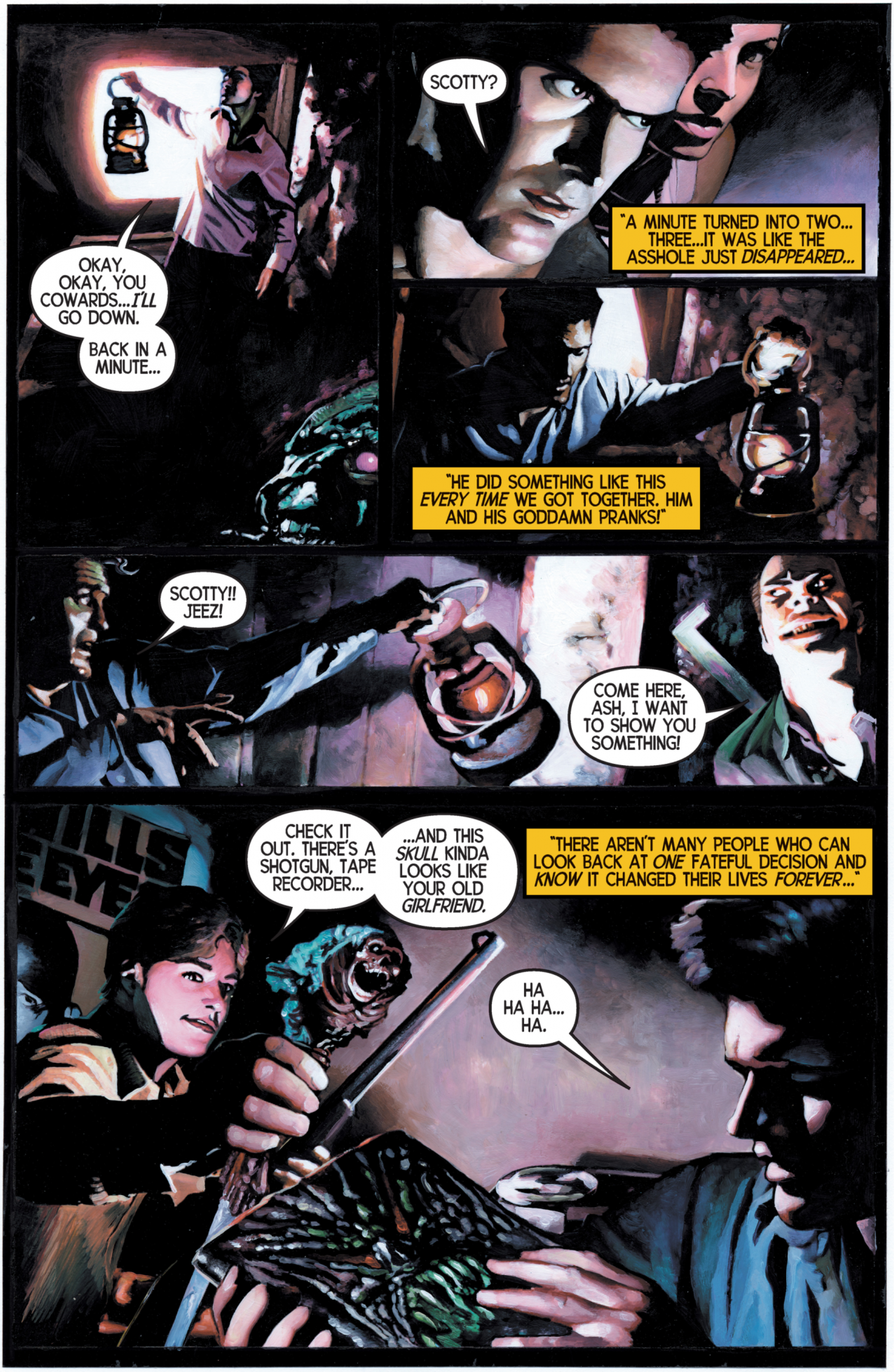

"I TRIED TO PUSH THE RENTAL AGENT, BUT HE DIDN'T KNOW *SHIT.*"
ghhhAAAA!
DON'T LOOK AT ME! STOP LOOKING AT ME!!
"TRUTH IS, *NOBODY* REALLY KNOWS WHAT HAPPENED..."
BWAH HA HAA! YOU GUYS'LL BUY *ANYTHING!*
HEY, ASH, WHERE ARE WE?
"THAT JERK. BUT MAYBE OL' BONEHEAD SENSED SOMETHING THE REST OF US DIDN'T..."
WELL, WE CROSSED THE TENNESSEE *BORDER...*
...WHICH WOULD PUT US...RIGHT...
WHEEL'S GONE CRAZY!
AHHHHH!

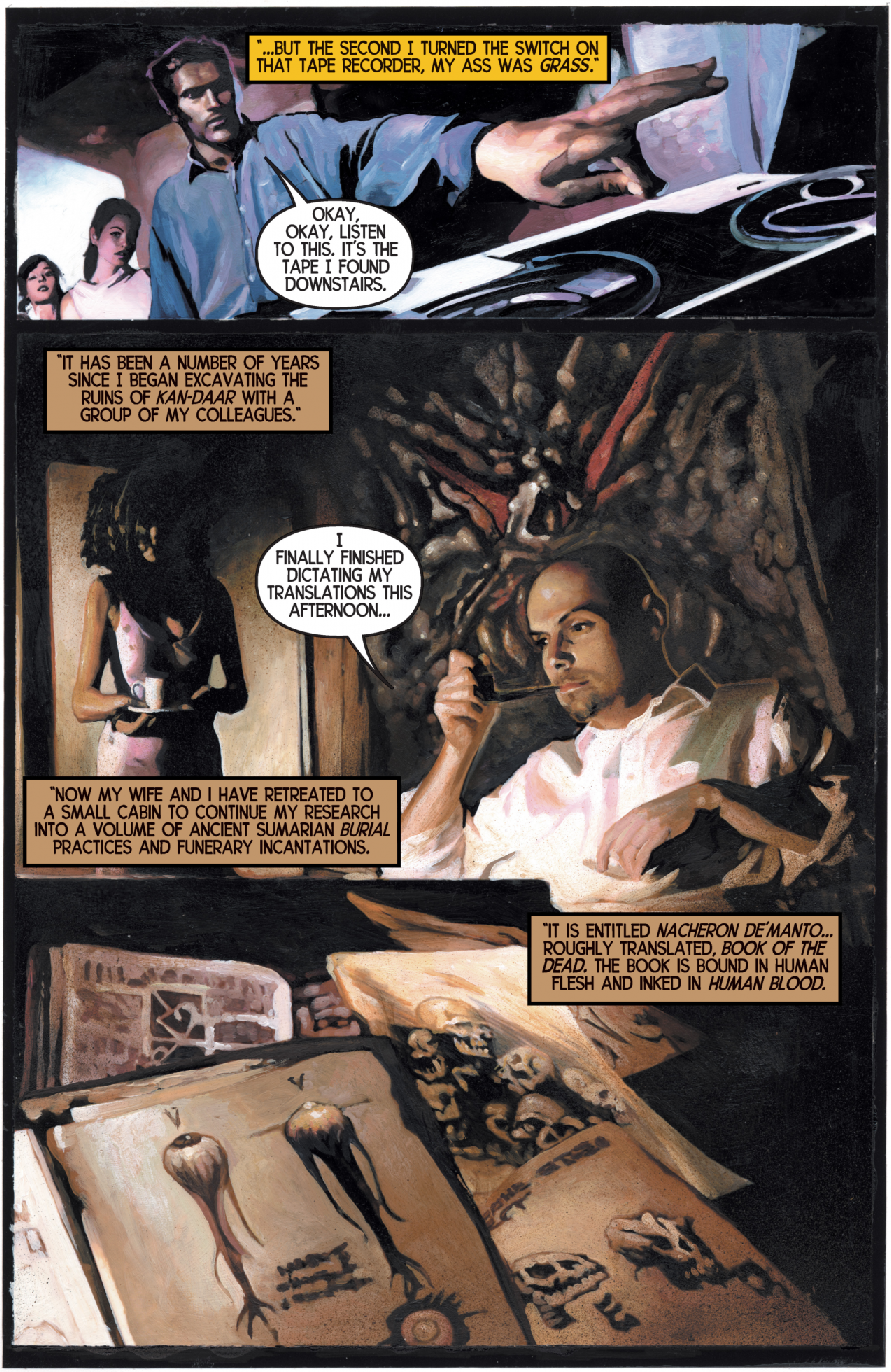

LAZY MARY 635
SCOTTY, *TURN!*
TURN!!!
SKREEE
YOUR DAMN STEERING WHEEL JERKED RIGHT OUT OF MY HAND!
I JUST HAD IT IN FOR A TUNE-UP YESTERDAY--
WELL THEY BETTER GO OVER IT AGAIN.
DANGEROUS BRIDGE
TRAVEL AT OWN RISK
3 TONS
OH MY GOD! *THIS* IS THE BRIDGE WE'RE GONNA CROSS?
DON'T LET THE NOISES FOOL YOU, GIRLS...

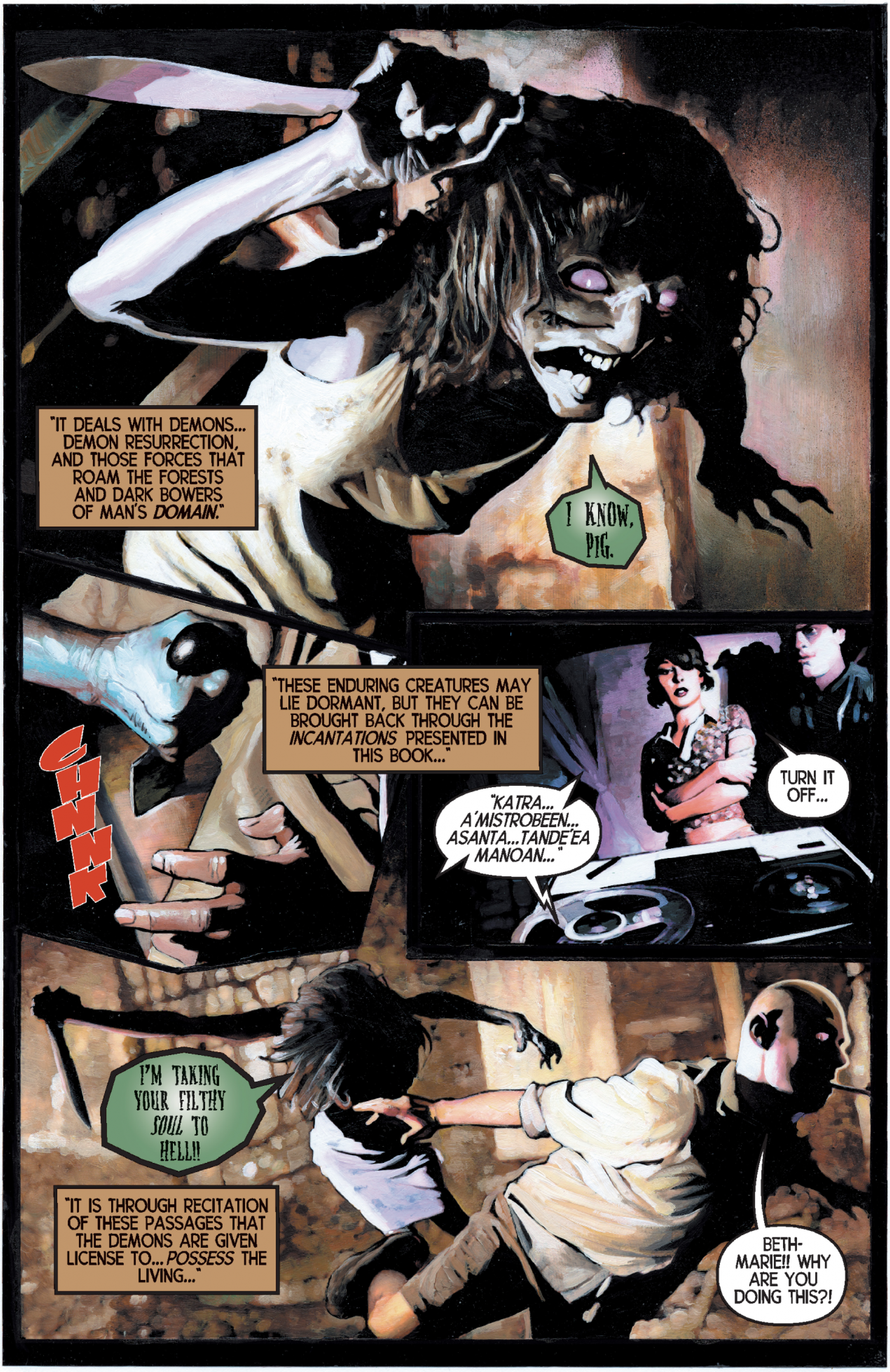

"...THIS THING IS SOLID AS A...
"...ROCK!"
KRUMMP
"WE SOMEHOW FLOUNDERED ACROSS, AND I REMEMBER THINKING THAT OUR LUCK HAD *HELD*.
"THE WHOLE DAMN TRIP HAD BEEN A SERIES OF NEAR MISSES.
"CRAZY AS IT SOUNDS *NOW*, I COULDN'T WAIT TO GET TO THE CABIN..."

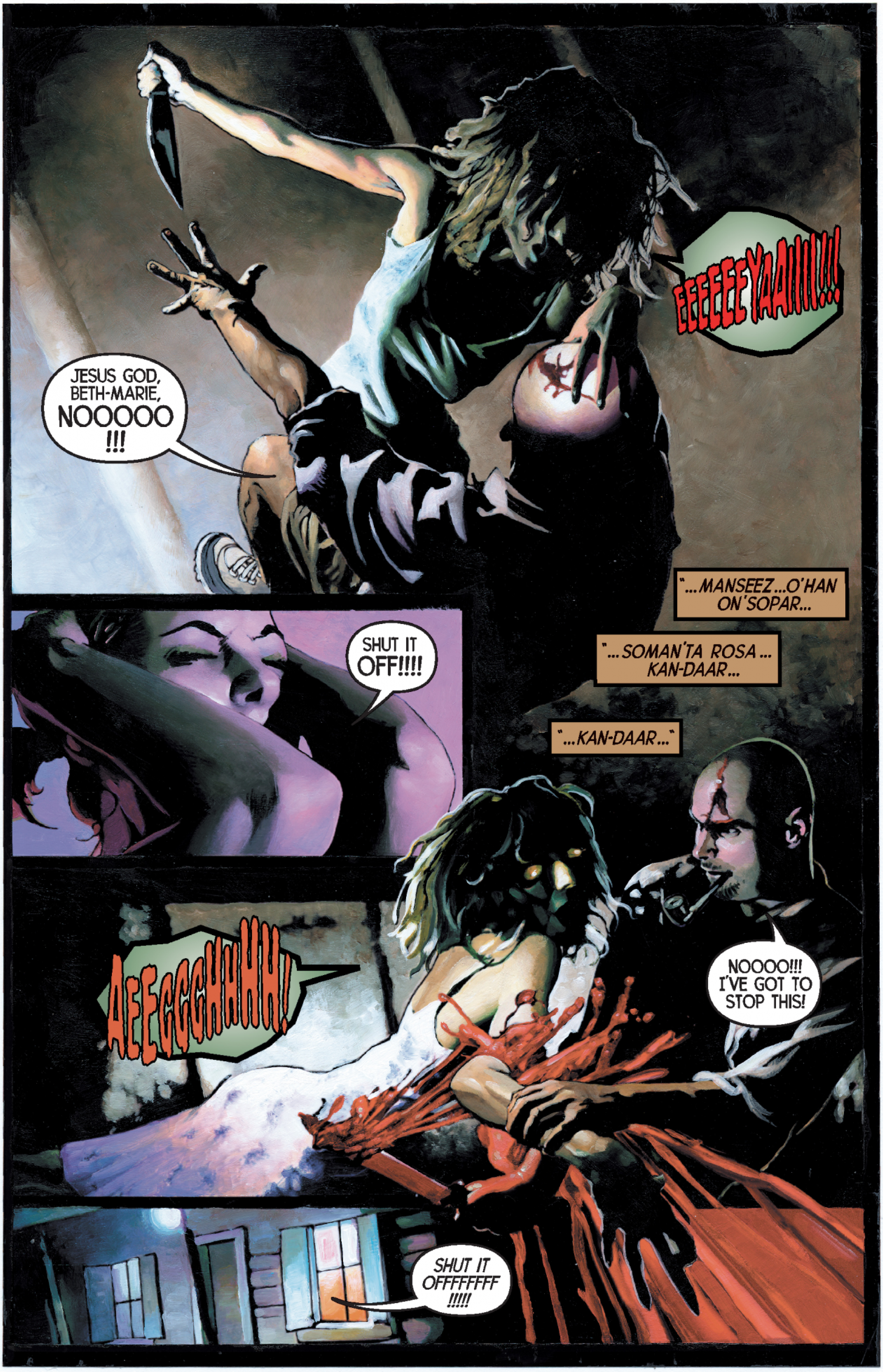

LOOKS... OKAY...I GUESS...
"...AND THE CABIN COULDN'T WAIT TO GET TO *US.*
"LOOKING BACK, I REALIZE THEY WERE ALL AROUND US...IN THE TREES...THE FOREST...
"...*ACHING* TO DEVOUR OUR *SOULS*."
JOINNNN... USSSSSS...
BOLTON 05

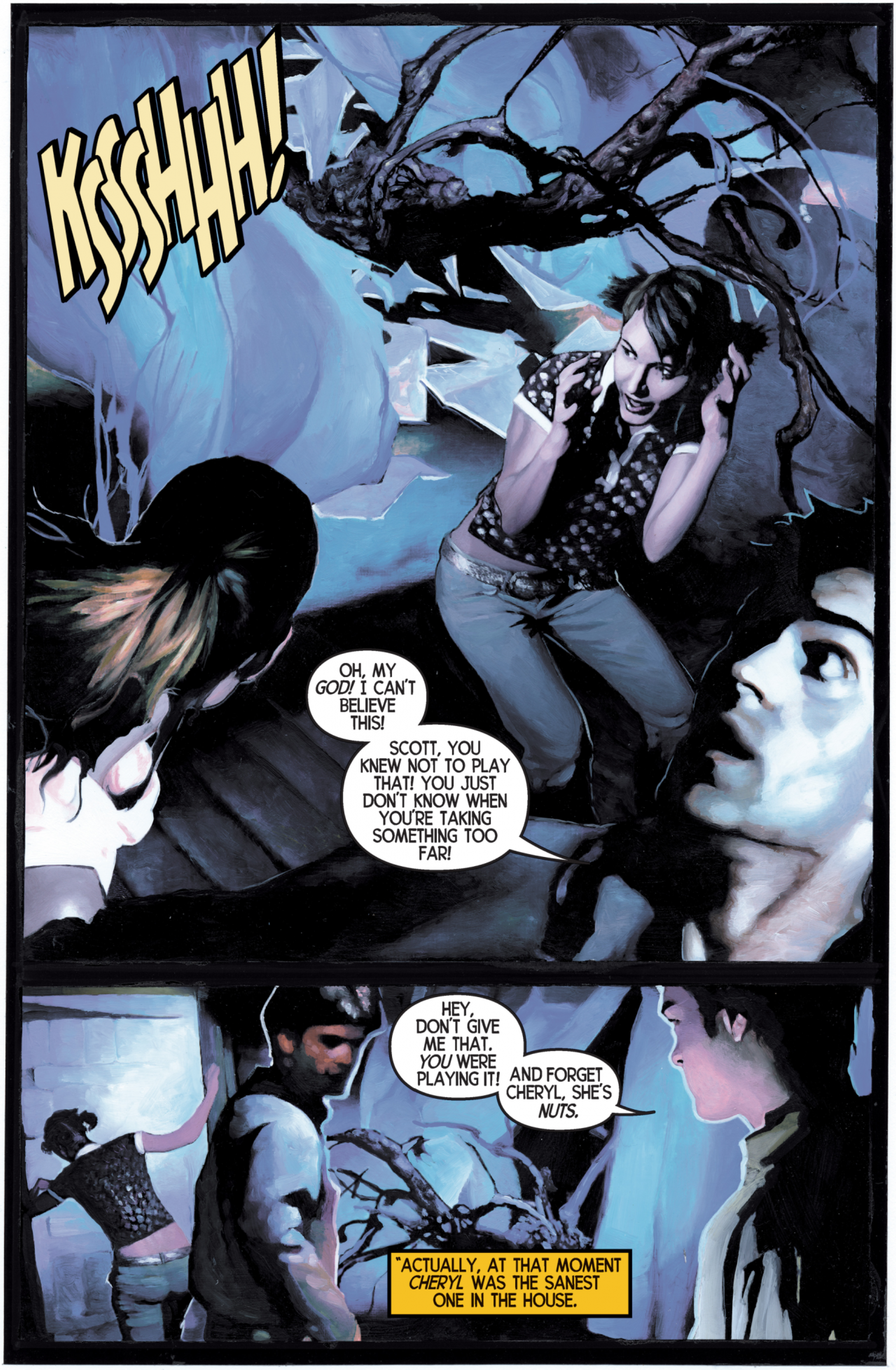

I'D LIKE TO MAKE A TOAST FOR ALL OF US THIS EVENING.
AS A GREEK FRIEND OF MINE ONCE SAID... UMM...UHH...
FREEEE US... JOIN US!!
WKAMM
WHAT *WAS* THAT?
WELL, WHATEVER IT IS, IT'S STILL DOWN THERE.
LET'S JUST CLOSE IT UP. IT'S PROBABLY JUST SOME... *ANIMAL*...
AN ANIMAL? AN *ANIMAL?!* THAT IS THE STUPIDEST THING I EVER HEARD OF!!
COME ON, CHERYL, WHY DON'T YOU GO DOWN AND *CHECK?*
SCOTTY, I'M *NOT* GOING DOWN THERE!

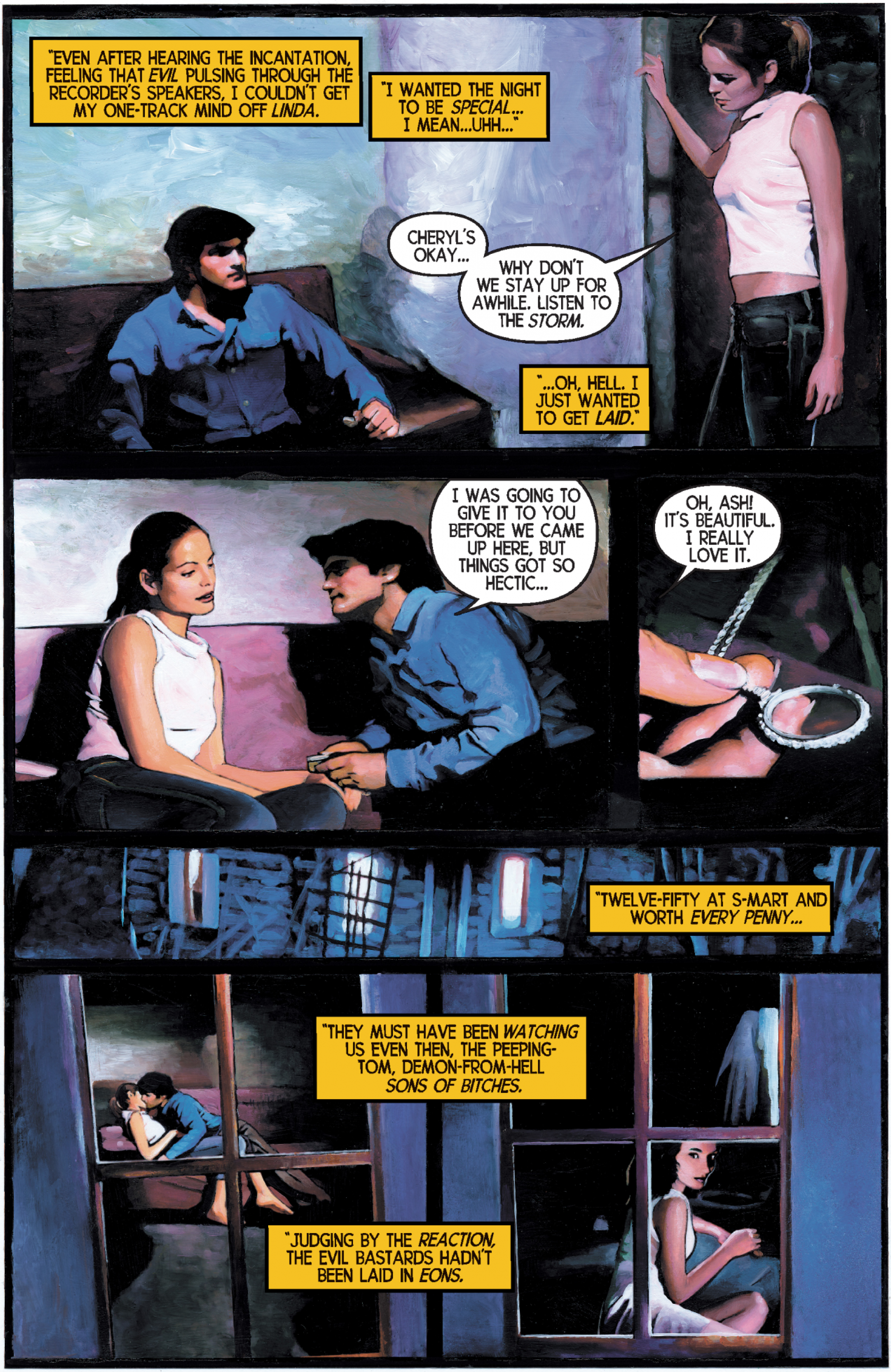

OKAY, OKAY, YOU COWARDS...*I'LL* GO DOWN.
BACK IN A MINUTE...
SCOTTY?
"A MINUTE TURNED INTO TWO... THREE...IT WAS LIKE THE ASSHOLE JUST *DISAPPEARED...*
"HE DID SOMETHING LIKE THIS *EVERY TIME* WE GOT TOGETHER. HIM AND HIS GODDAMN PRANKS!"
SCOTTY!! JEEZ!
COME HERE, ASH, I WANT TO SHOW YOU SOMETHING!
CHECK IT OUT. THERE'S A SHOTGUN, TAPE RECORDER...
...AND THIS *SKULL* KINDA LOOKS LIKE YOUR OLD *GIRLFRIEND.*
"THERE AREN'T MANY PEOPLE WHO CAN LOOK BACK AT *ONE* FATEFUL DECISION AND *KNOW* IT CHANGED THEIR LIVES *FOREVER...*"
HA HA HA... HA.

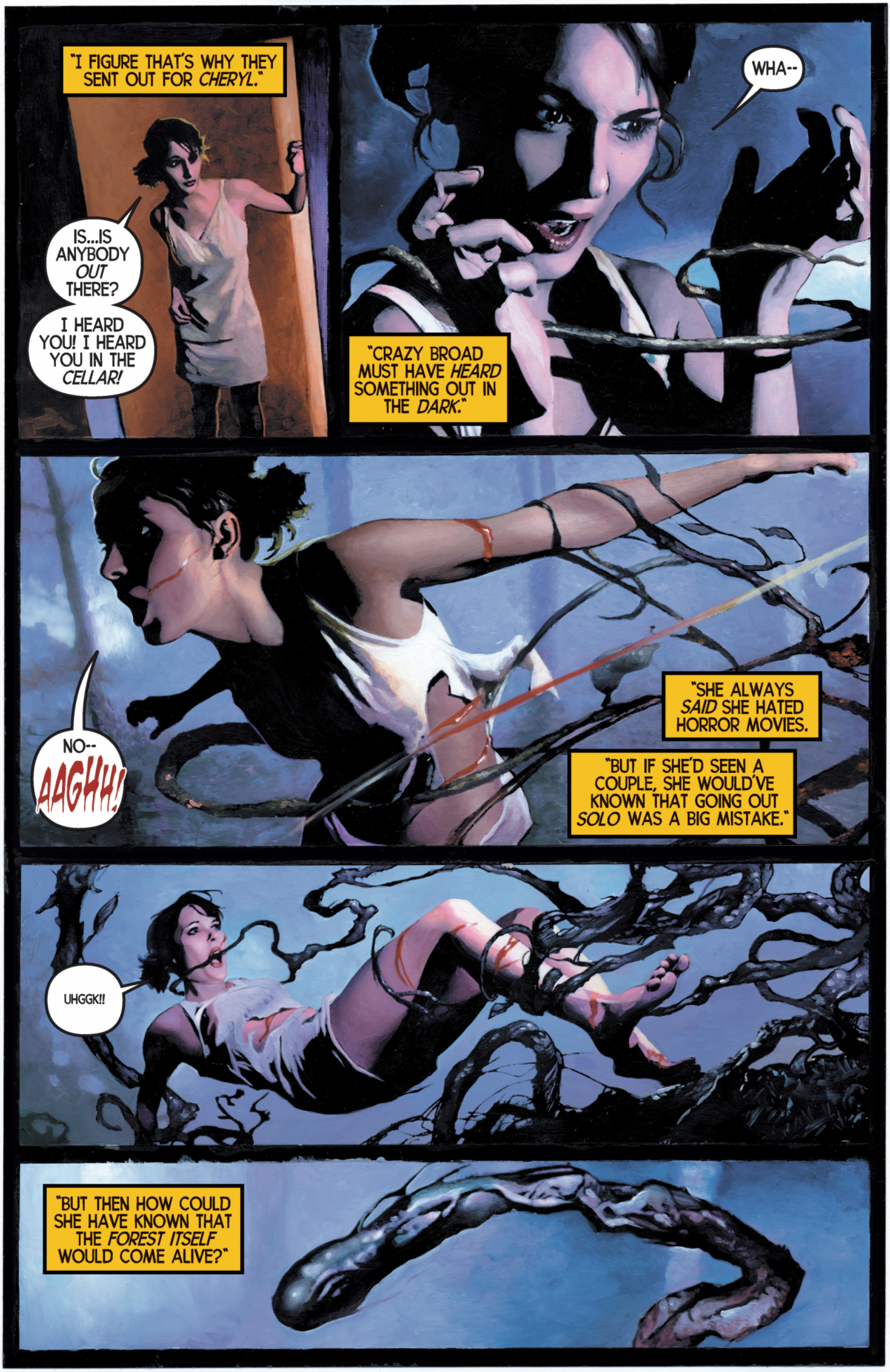

"...BUT THE SECOND I TURNED THE SWITCH ON THAT TAPE RECORDER, MY ASS WAS *GRASS.*"
OKAY, OKAY, LISTEN TO THIS. IT'S THE TAPE I FOUND DOWNSTAIRS.
"IT HAS BEEN A NUMBER OF YEARS SINCE I BEGAN EXCAVATING THE RUINS OF *KAN-DAAR* WITH A GROUP OF MY COLLEAGUES."
I FINALLY FINISHED DICTATING MY TRANSLATIONS THIS AFTERNOON...
"NOW MY WIFE AND I HAVE RETREATED TO A SMALL CABIN TO CONTINUE MY RESEARCH INTO A VOLUME OF ANCIENT SUMARIAN *BURIAL* PRACTICES AND FUNERARY INCANTATIONS.
"IT IS ENTITLED *NACHERON DE'MANTO...* ROUGHLY TRANSLATED, *BOOK OF THE DEAD.* THE BOOK IS BOUND IN HUMAN FLESH AND INKED IN *HUMAN BLOOD.*

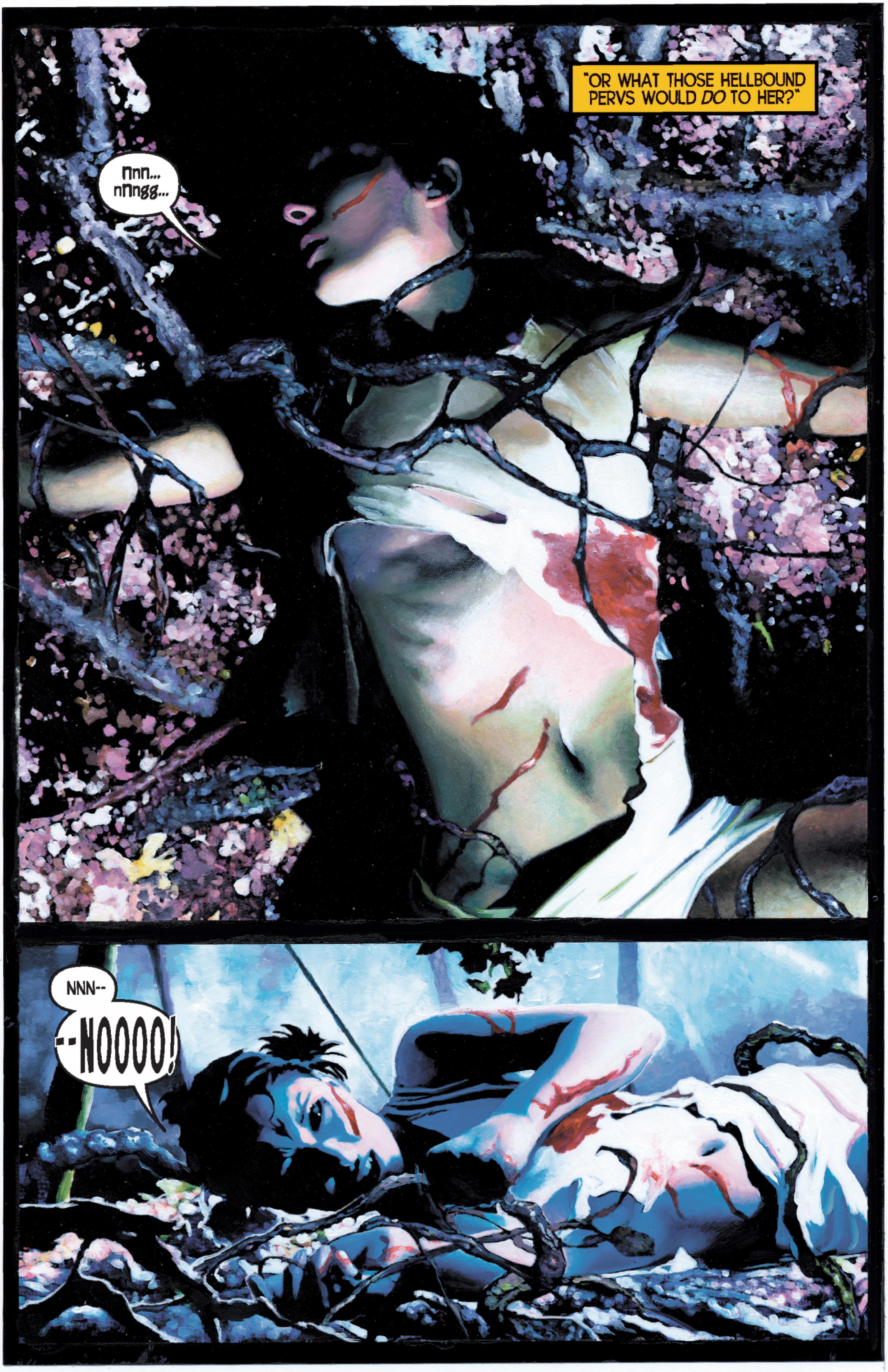

"IT DEALS WITH DEMONS... DEMON RESURRECTION, AND THOSE FORCES THAT ROAM THE FORESTS AND DARK BOWERS OF MAN'S *DOMAIN.*"
I KNOW, PIG.
"THESE ENDURING CREATURES MAY LIE DORMANT, BUT THEY CAN BE BROUGHT BACK THROUGH THE *INCANTATIONS* PRESENTED IN THIS BOOK..."
CHNNK
"KATRA... A'MISTROBEEN... ASANTA...TANDE'EA MANOAN..."
TURN IT OFF...
I'M TAKING YOUR FILTHY *SOUL* TO HELL!!
"IT IS THROUGH RECITATION OF THESE PASSAGES THAT THE DEMONS ARE GIVEN LICENSE TO...*POSSESS* THE LIVING..."
BETH-MARIE!! WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS?!

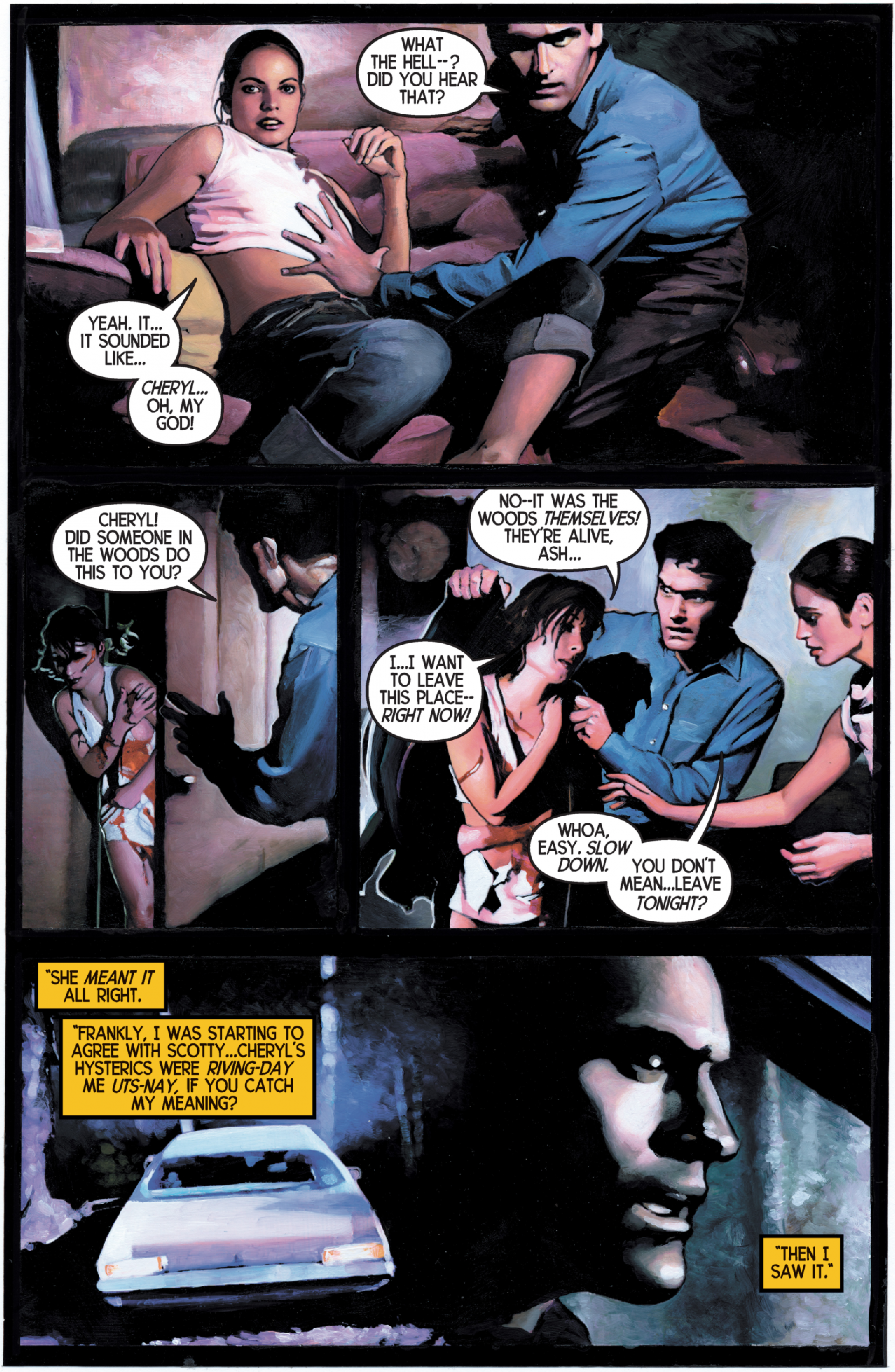

EEEEEEYAAIIII!!!
JESUS GOD, BETH-MARIE, NOOOOO !!!
"...MANSEEZ...O'HAN ON'SOPAR...
SHUT IT OFF!!!!
"...SOMAN'TA ROSA... KAN-DAAR...
"...KAN-DAAR..."
AEEGGHHHH!
NOOOO!!! I'VE GOT TO STOP THIS!
SHUT IT OFFFFFFFF !!!!!

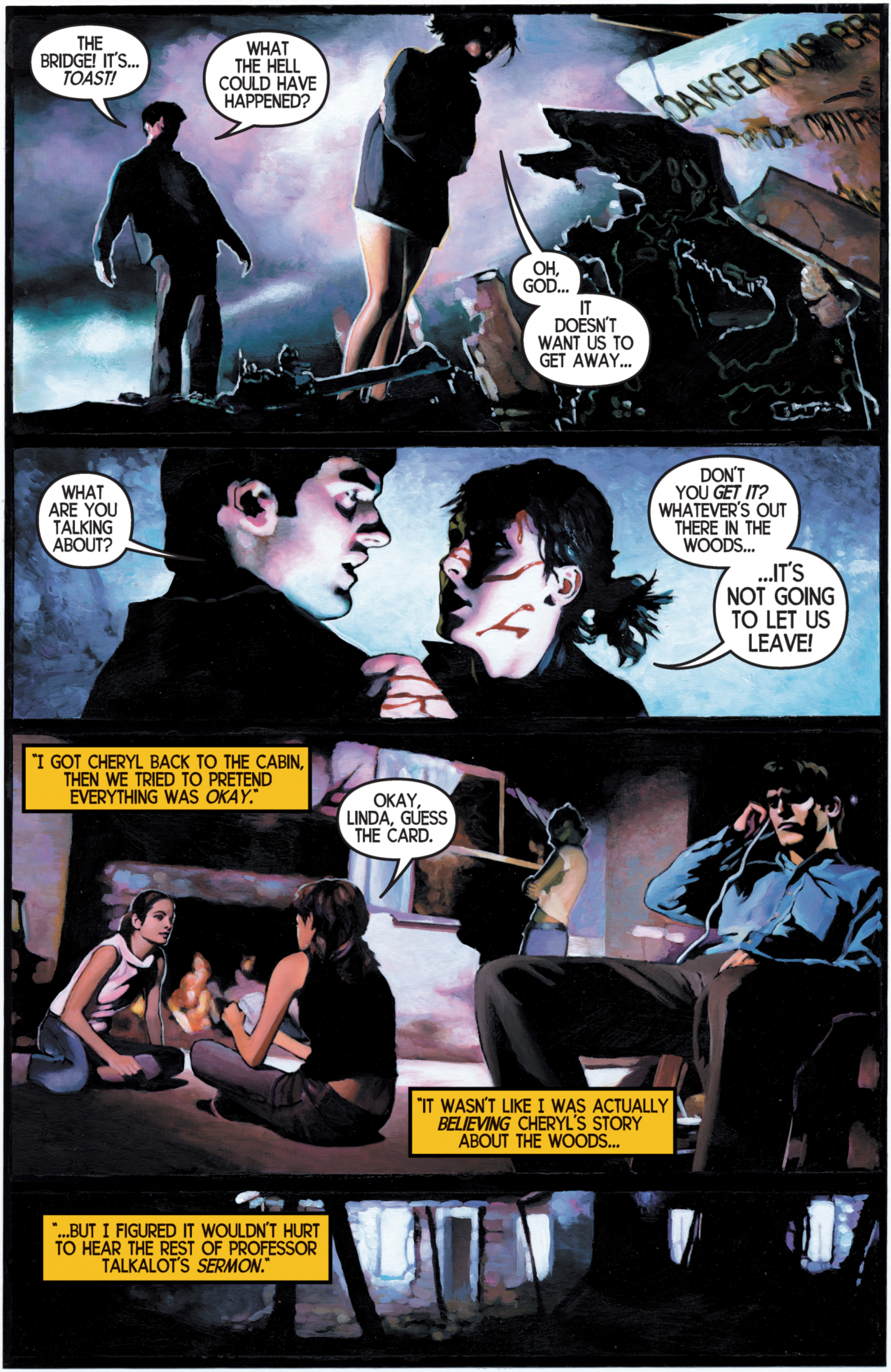

KRSSHHH!
OH, MY *GOD!* I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS!
SCOTT, YOU KNEW NOT TO PLAY THAT! YOU JUST DON'T KNOW WHEN YOU'RE TAKING SOMETHING TOO FAR!
HEY, DON'T GIVE ME THAT. *YOU* WERE PLAYING IT!
AND FORGET CHERYL, SHE'S *NUTS.*
"ACTUALLY, AT THAT MOMENT *CHERYL* WAS THE SANEST ONE IN THE HOUSE.

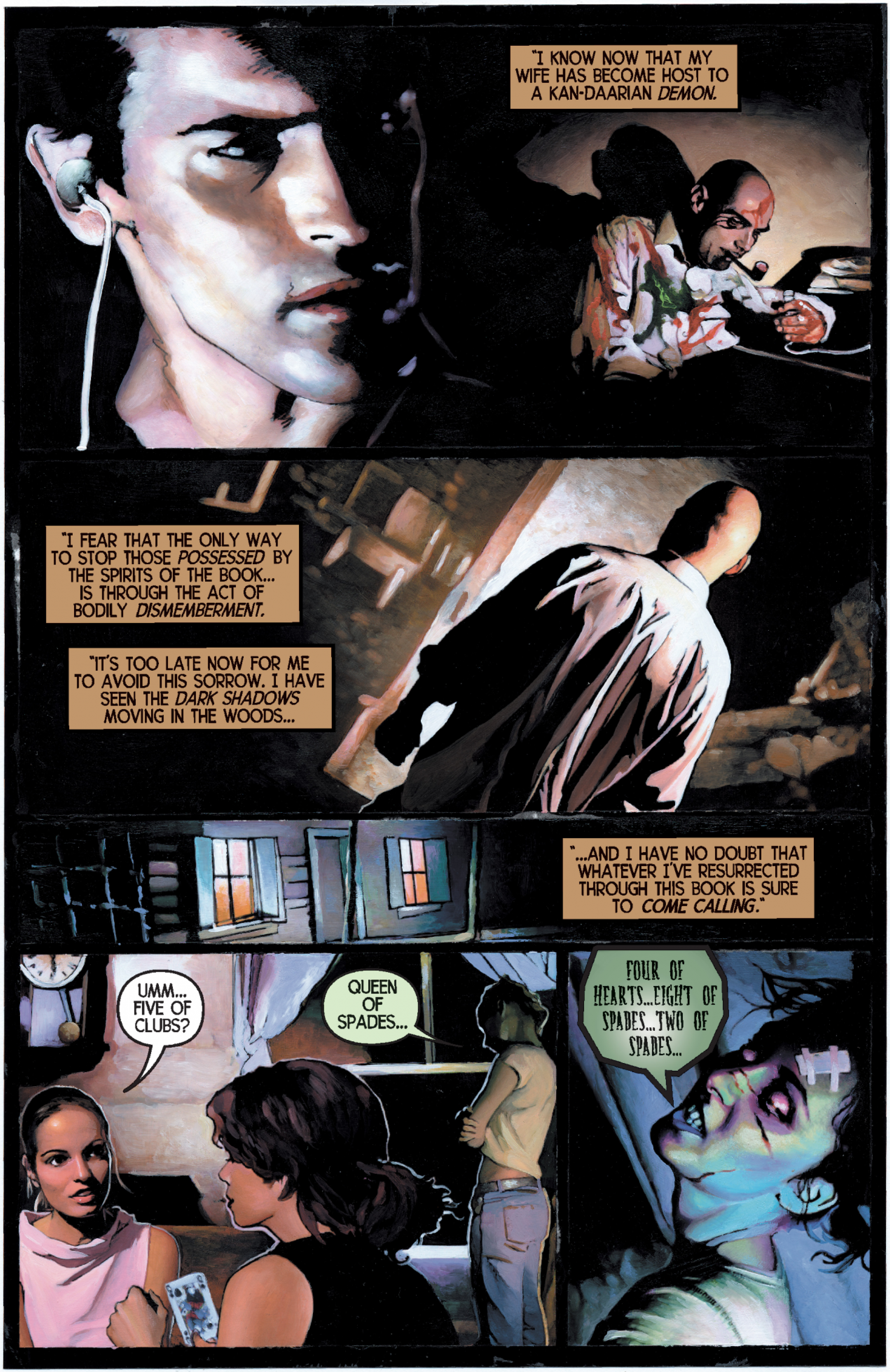

"EVEN AFTER HEARING THE INCANTATION, FEELING THAT *EVIL* PULSING THROUGH THE RECORDER'S SPEAKERS, I COULDN'T GET MY ONE-TRACK MIND OFF *LINDA*.
"I WANTED THE NIGHT TO BE *SPECIAL*... I MEAN...UHH..."
CHERYL'S OKAY...
WHY DON'T WE STAY UP FOR AWHILE. LISTEN TO THE *STORM*.
"...OH, HELL. I JUST WANTED TO GET *LAID*."
I WAS GOING TO GIVE IT TO YOU BEFORE WE CAME UP HERE, BUT THINGS GOT SO HECTIC...
OH, ASH! IT'S BEAUTIFUL. I REALLY LOVE IT.
"TWELVE-FIFTY AT S-MART AND WORTH *EVERY PENNY*...
"THEY MUST HAVE BEEN *WATCHING* US EVEN THEN, THE PEEPING-TOM, DEMON-FROM-HELL *SONS OF BITCHES*.
"JUDGING BY THE *REACTION*, THE EVIL BASTARDS HADN'T BEEN LAID IN *EONS*.

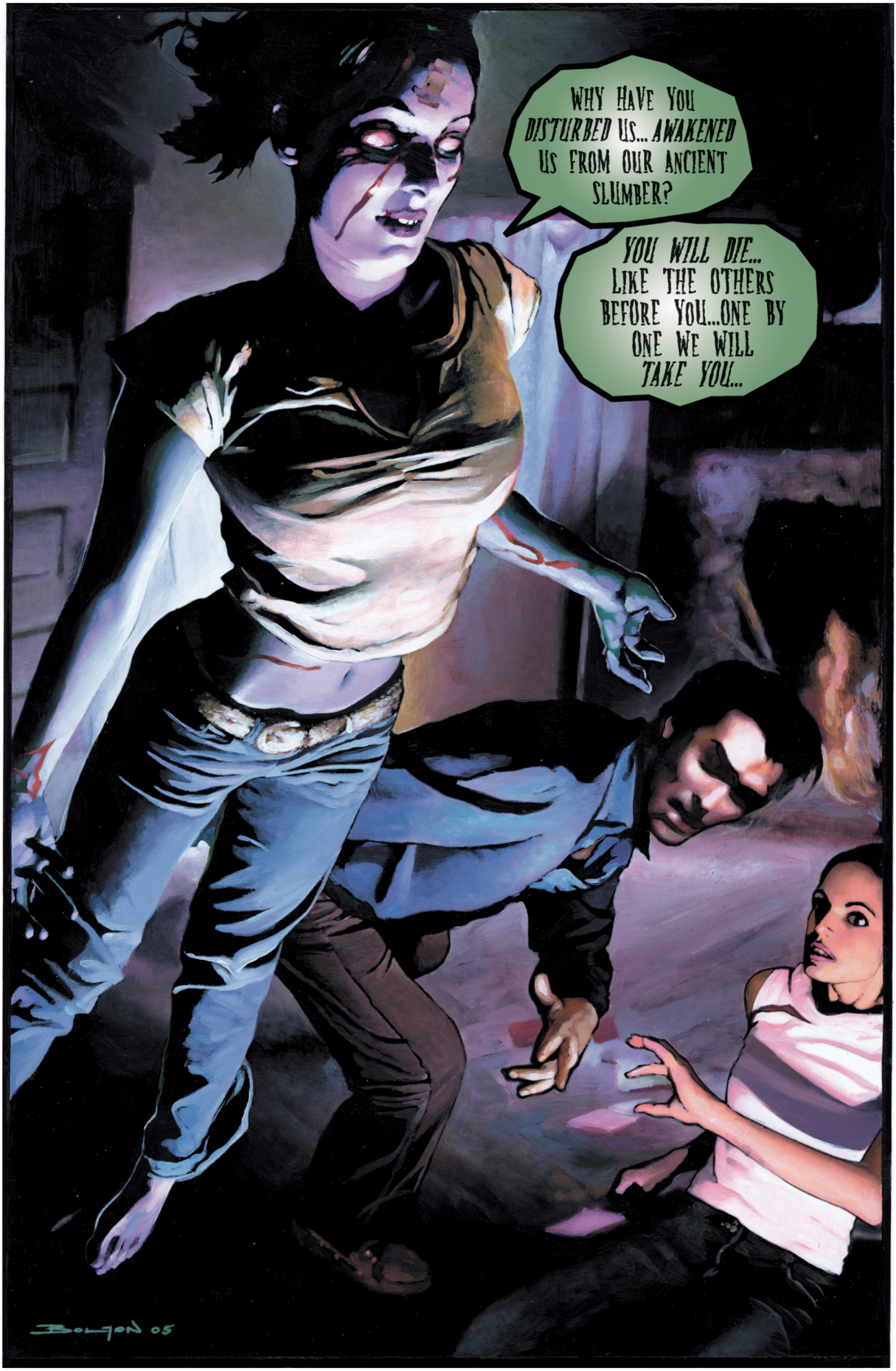

"I FIGURE THAT'S WHY THEY SENT OUT FOR *CHERYL*."
IS...IS ANYBODY *OUT* THERE?
I HEARD YOU! I HEARD YOU IN THE *CELLAR!*
WHA--
"CRAZY BROAD MUST HAVE *HEARD* SOMETHING OUT IN THE *DARK*."
NO-- AAGHH!
"SHE ALWAYS *SAID* SHE HATED HORROR MOVIES.
"BUT IF SHE'D SEEN A COUPLE, SHE WOULD'VE KNOWN THAT GOING OUT *SOLO* WAS A BIG MISTAKE."
UHGGK!!
"BUT THEN HOW COULD SHE HAVE KNOWN THAT THE *FOREST ITSELF* WOULD COME ALIVE?"


"OR WHAT THOSE HELLBOUND PERVS WOULD *DO* TO HER?"
nnn... nnngg...
NNN--
--NOOOO!


WHAT THE HELL--? DID YOU HEAR THAT?
YEAH. IT... IT SOUNDED LIKE...
CHERYL... OH, MY GOD!
CHERYL! DID SOMEONE IN THE WOODS DO THIS TO YOU?
NO--IT WAS THE WOODS *THEMSELVES!* THEY'RE ALIVE, ASH...
I...I WANT TO LEAVE THIS PLACE-- *RIGHT NOW!*
WHOA, EASY. *SLOW DOWN.*
YOU DON'T MEAN...LEAVE *TONIGHT?*
"SHE *MEANT IT* ALL RIGHT.
"FRANKLY, I WAS STARTING TO AGREE WITH SCOTTY...CHERYL'S HYSTERICS WERE *RIVING-DAY* ME *UTS-NAY,* IF YOU CATCH MY MEANING?
"THEN I SAW IT."

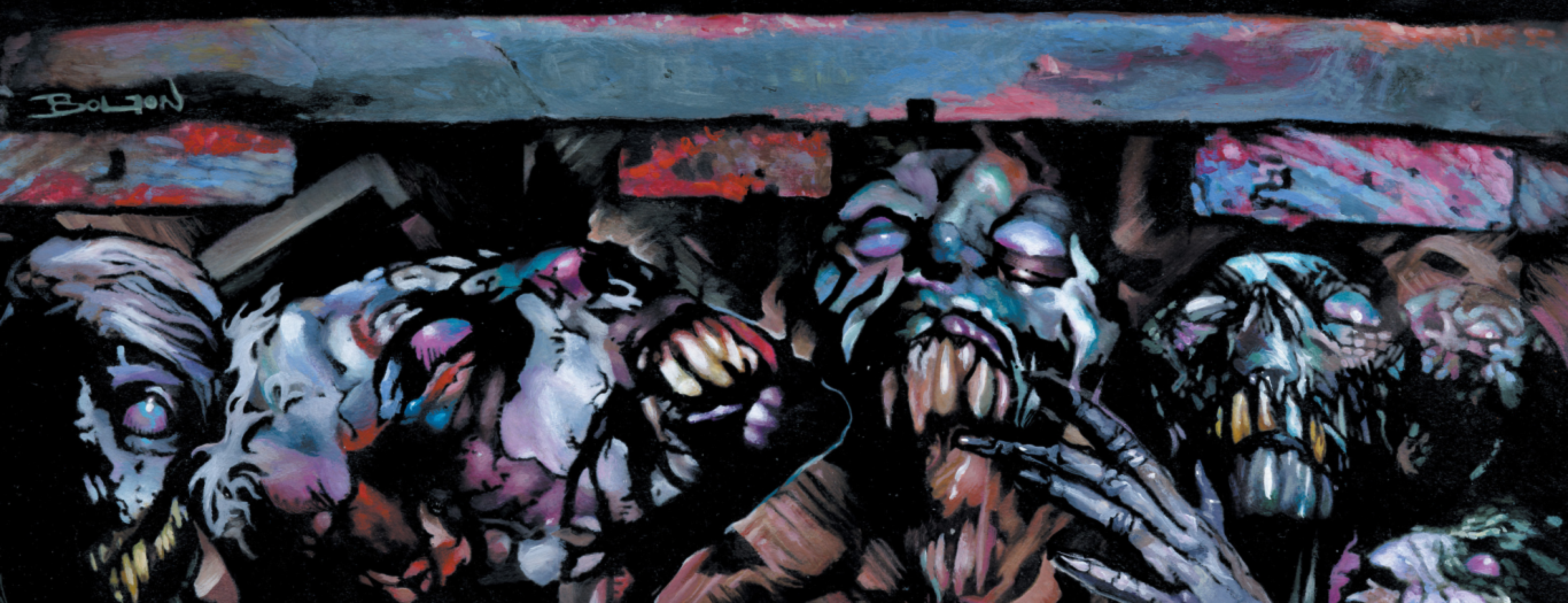

THE BRIDGE! IT'S... *TOAST!*
WHAT THE HELL COULD HAVE HAPPENED?
DANGEROUS
OH, GOD...
IT DOESN'T WANT US TO GET AWAY...
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
DON'T YOU *GET IT?* WHATEVER'S OUT THERE IN THE WOODS...
...IT'S NOT GOING TO LET US LEAVE!
"I GOT CHERYL BACK TO THE CABIN, THEN WE TRIED TO PRETEND EVERYTHING WAS *OKAY.*"
OKAY, LINDA, GUESS THE CARD.
"IT WASN'T LIKE I WAS ACTUALLY *BELIEVING* CHERYL'S STORY ABOUT THE WOODS...
"...BUT I FIGURED IT WOULDN'T HURT TO HEAR THE REST OF PROFESSOR TALKALOT'S *SERMON.*"

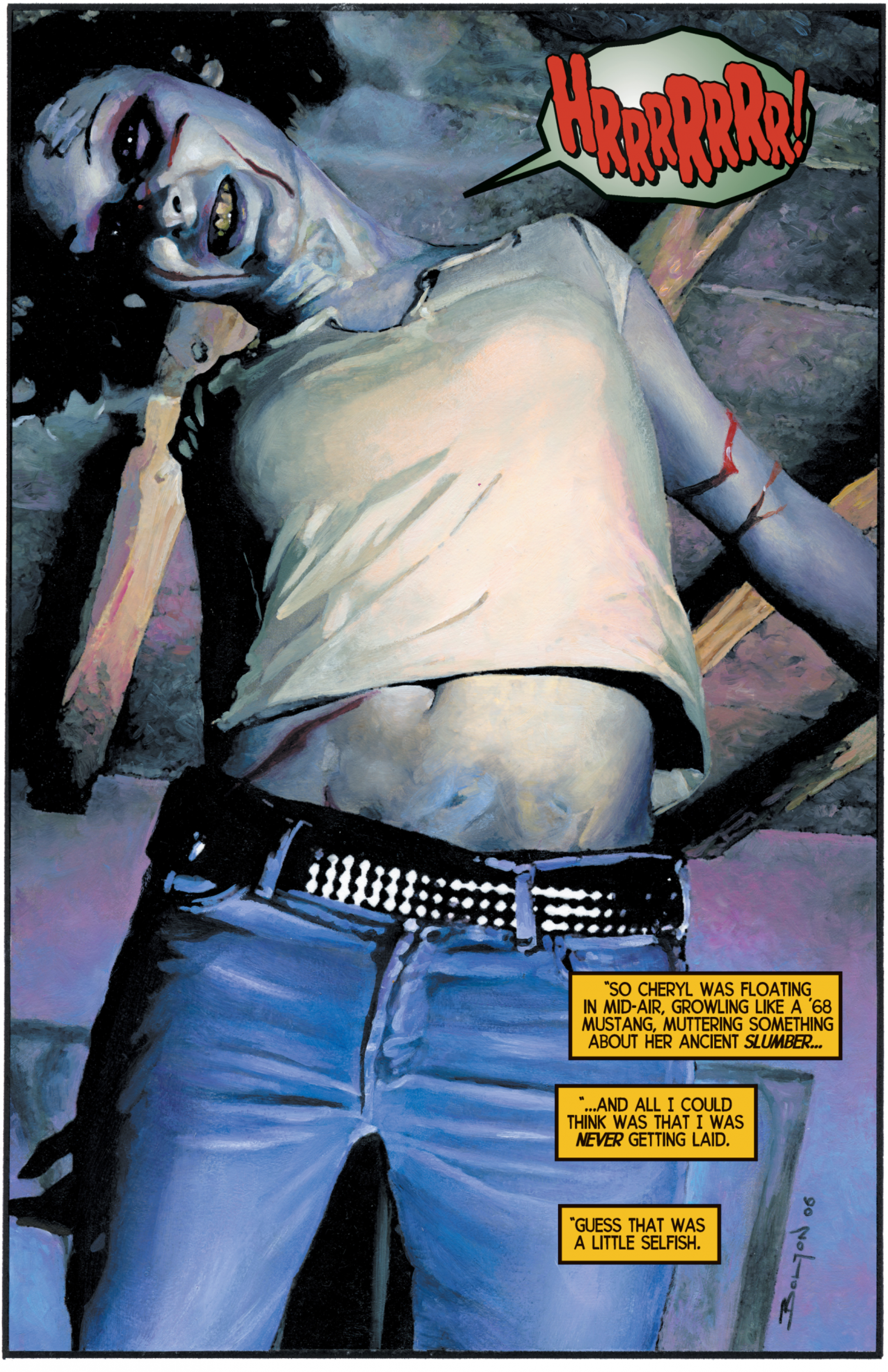

"I KNOW NOW THAT MY WIFE HAS BECOME HOST TO A KAN-DAARIAN *DEMON.*
"I FEAR THAT THE ONLY WAY TO STOP THOSE *POSSESSED* BY THE SPIRITS OF THE BOOK... IS THROUGH THE ACT OF BODILY *DISMEMBERMENT.*
"IT'S TOO LATE NOW FOR ME TO AVOID THIS SORROW. I HAVE SEEN THE *DARK SHADOWS* MOVING IN THE WOODS...
"...AND I HAVE NO DOUBT THAT WHATEVER I'VE RESURRECTED THROUGH THIS BOOK IS SURE TO *COME CALLING.*"
UMM... FIVE OF CLUBS?
QUEEN OF SPADES...
FOUR OF HEARTS...EIGHT OF SPADES...TWO OF SPADES...


WHY HAVE YOU *DISTURBED* US... *AWAKENED* US FROM OUR ANCIENT SLUMBER?
YOU WILL DIE... LIKE THE OTHERS BEFORE YOU...ONE BY ONE WE WILL *TAKE YOU...*
BOLTON 05

CHAPTER TWO

"IT WAS TIME TO HIDE
THE REST OF THE PENCILS…"

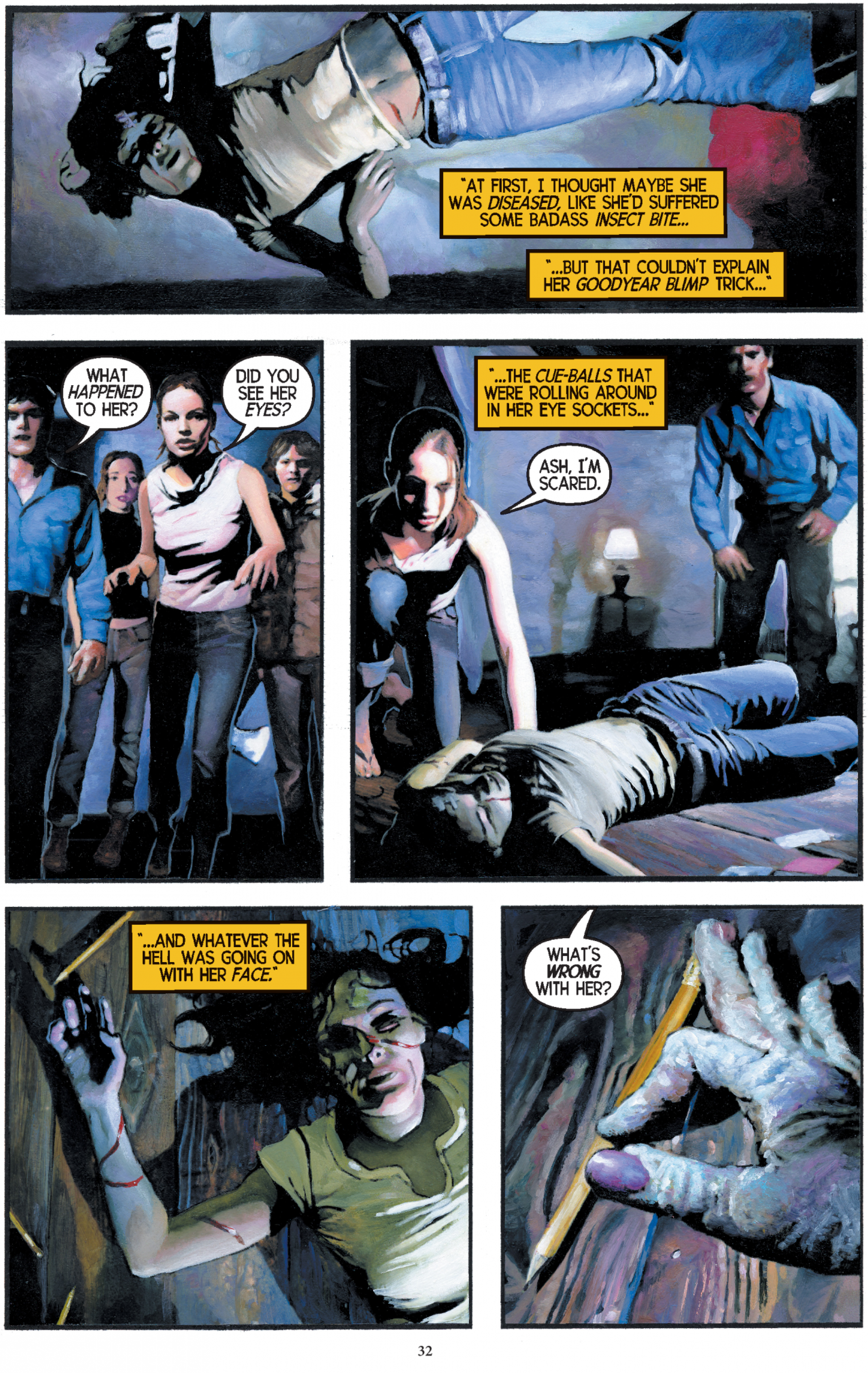


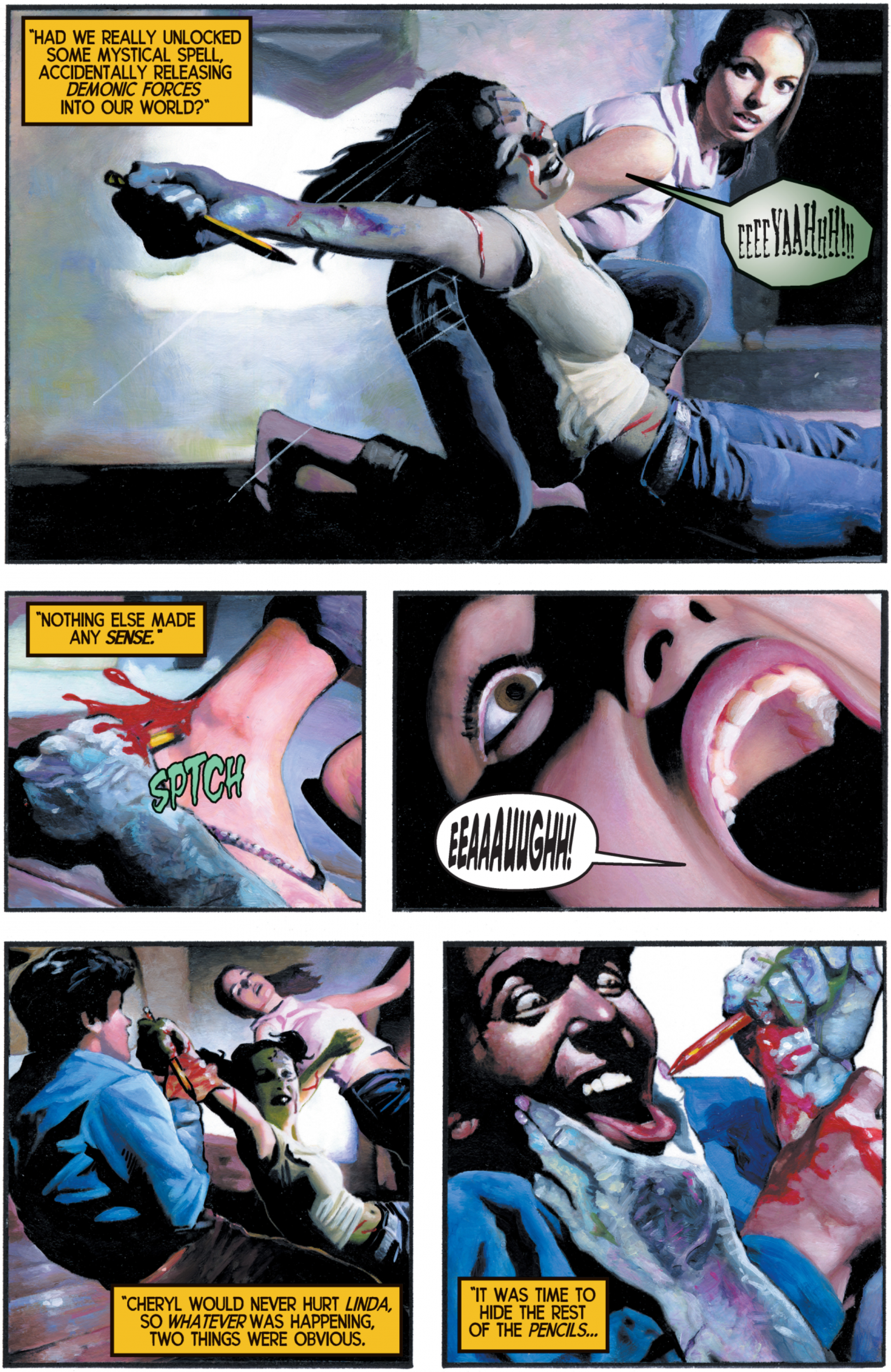


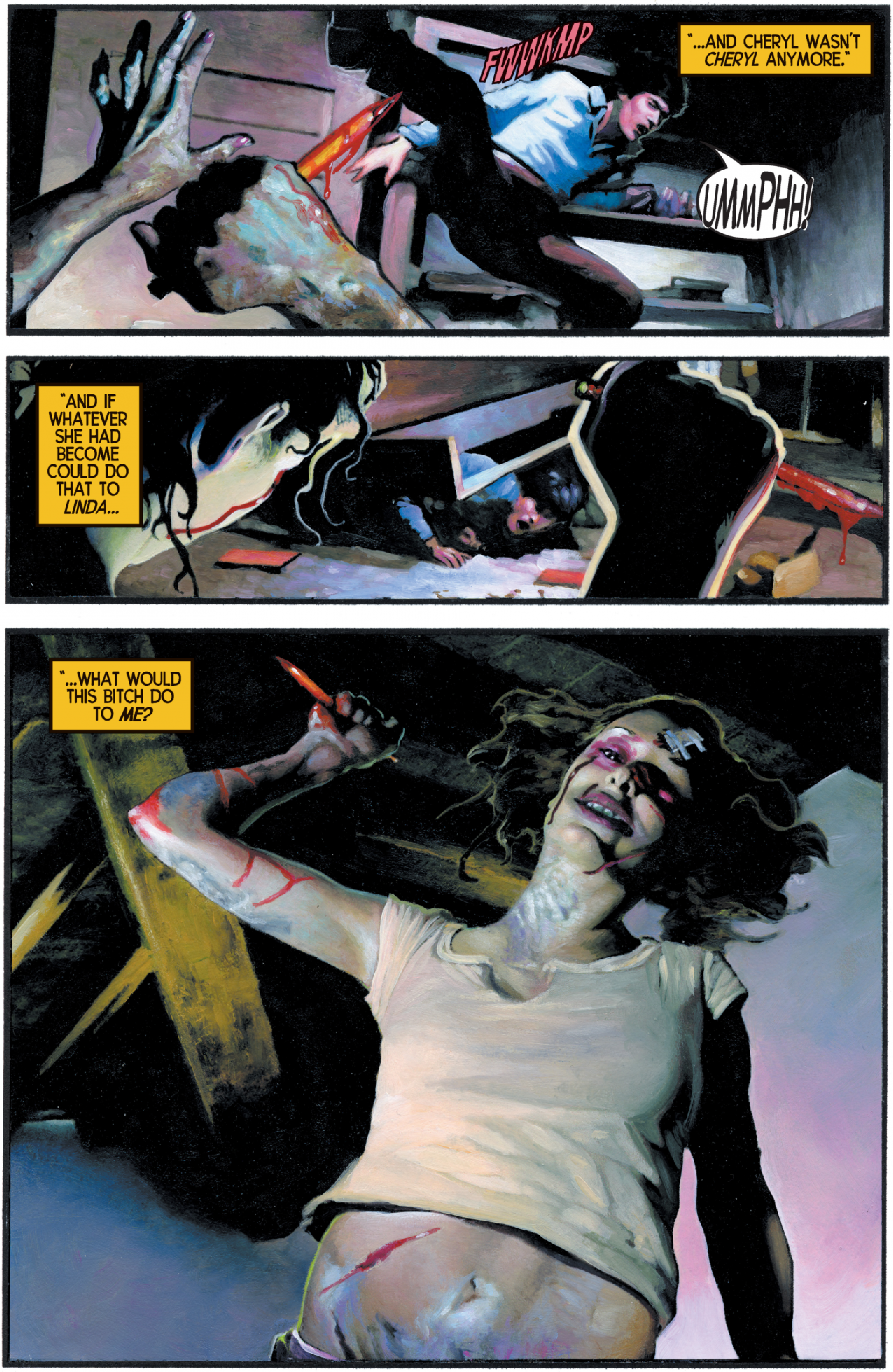
"SO CHERYL WAS FLOATING IN MID-AIR, GROWLING LIKE A '68 MUSTANG, MUTTERING SOMETHING ABOUT HER ANCIENT *SLUMBER...*

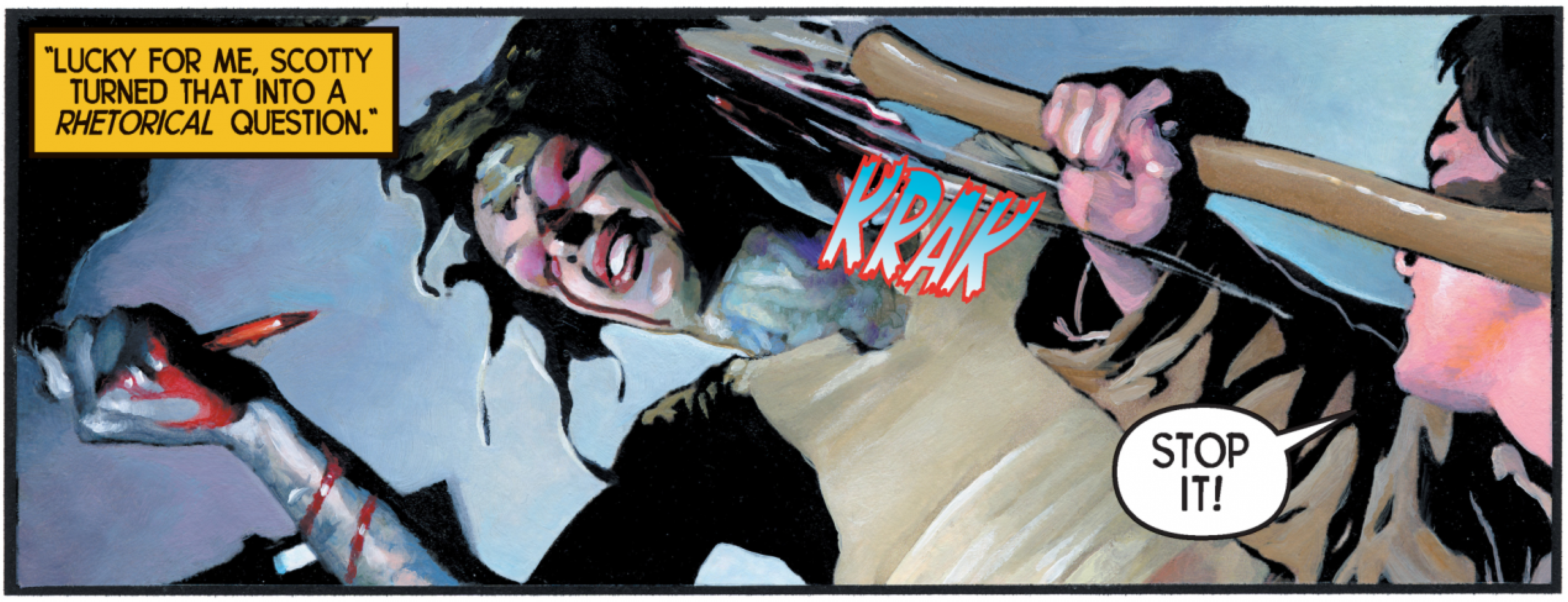
"...AND ALL I COULD THINK WAS THAT I WAS *NEVER* GETTING LAID.

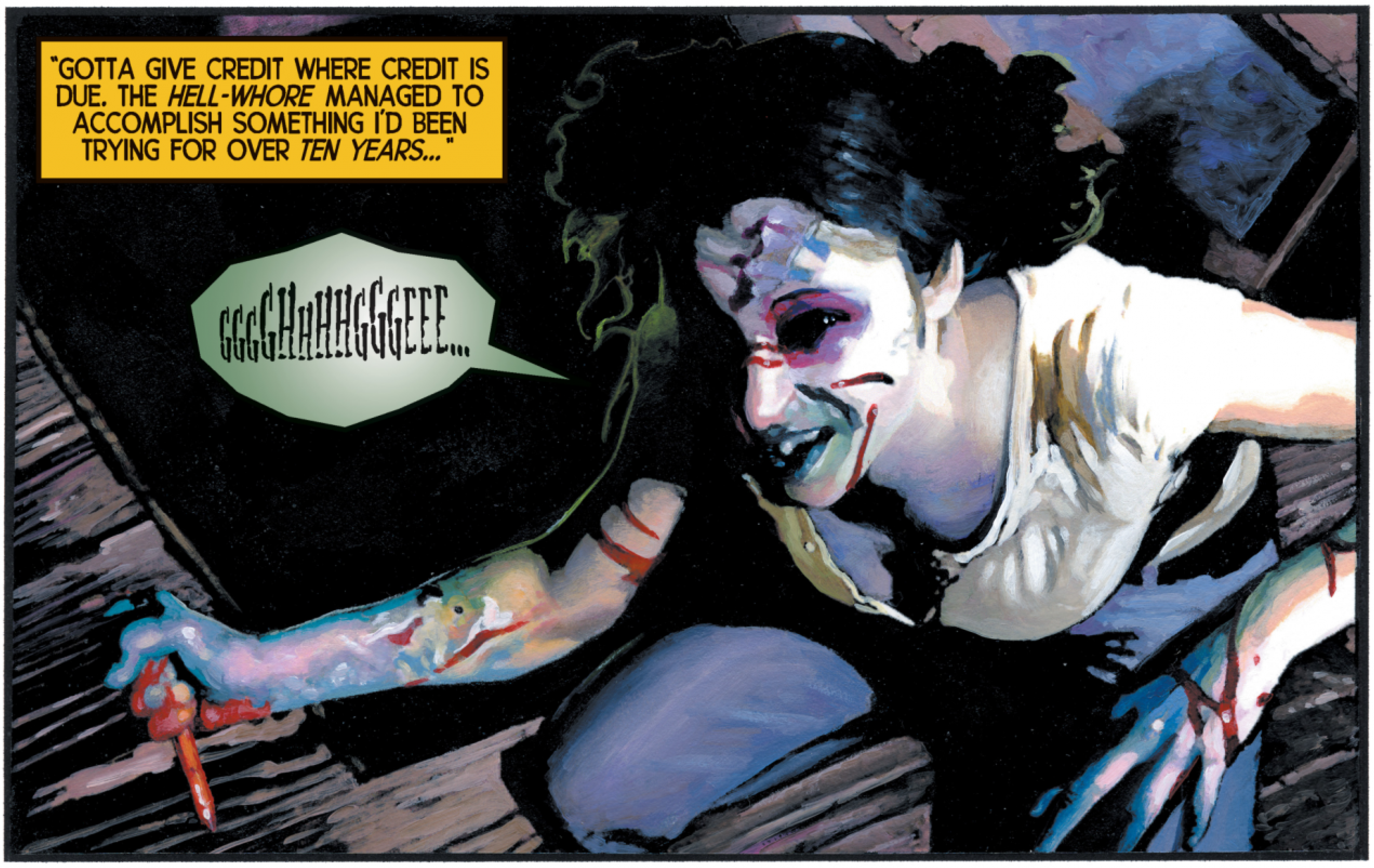
"GUESS THAT WAS A LITTLE SELFISH.

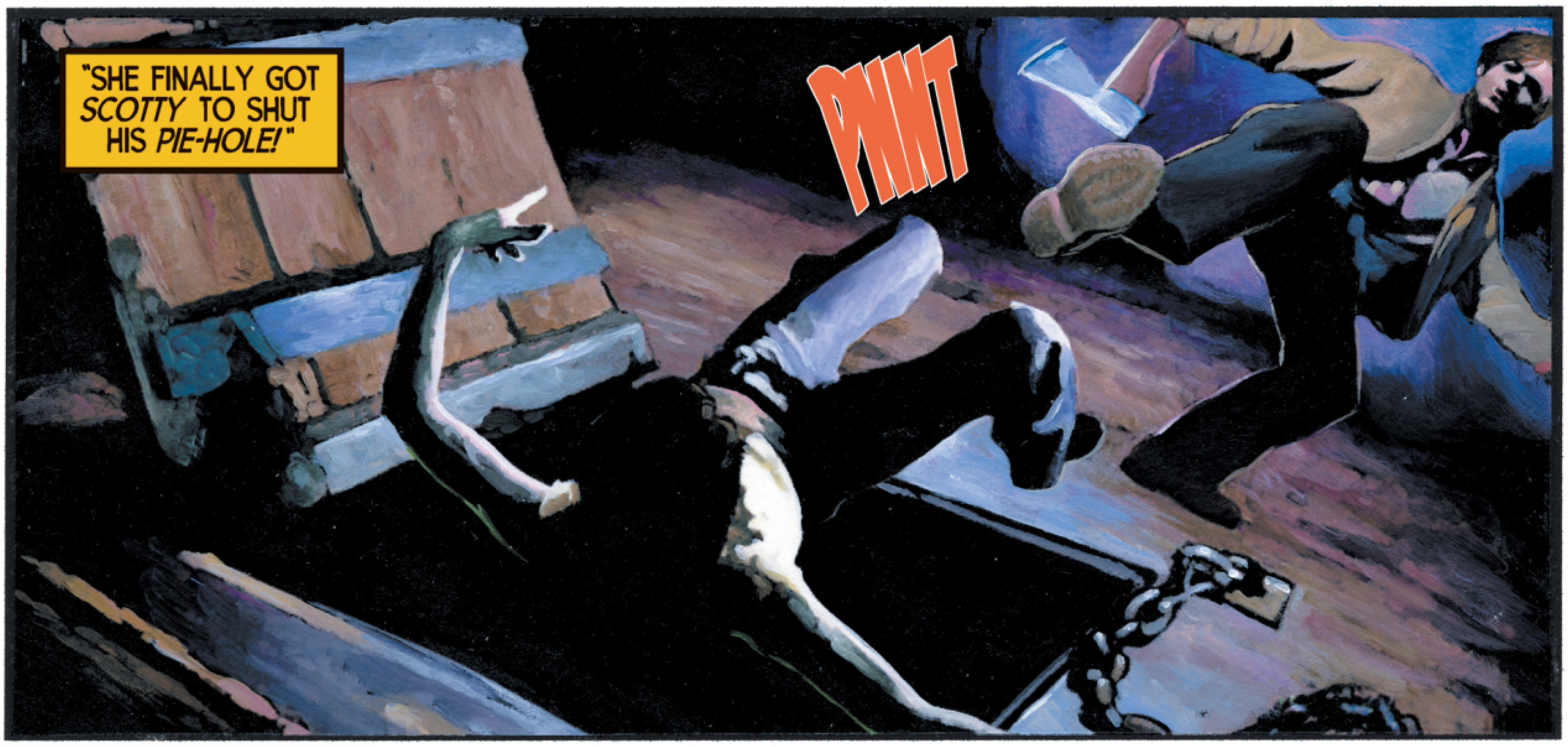

"AT FIRST, I THOUGHT MAYBE SHE WAS *DISEASED,* LIKE SHE'D SUFFERED SOME BADASS *INSECT BITE...*
"...BUT THAT COULDN'T EXPLAIN HER *GOODYEAR BLIMP* TRICK..."
WHAT *HAPPENED* TO HER?
DID YOU SEE HER *EYES?*
"...THE *CUE-BALLS* THAT WERE ROLLING AROUND IN HER EYE SOCKETS..."
ASH, I'M SCARED.
"...AND WHATEVER THE HELL WAS GOING ON WITH HER *FACE.*"
WHAT'S *WRONG* WITH HER?

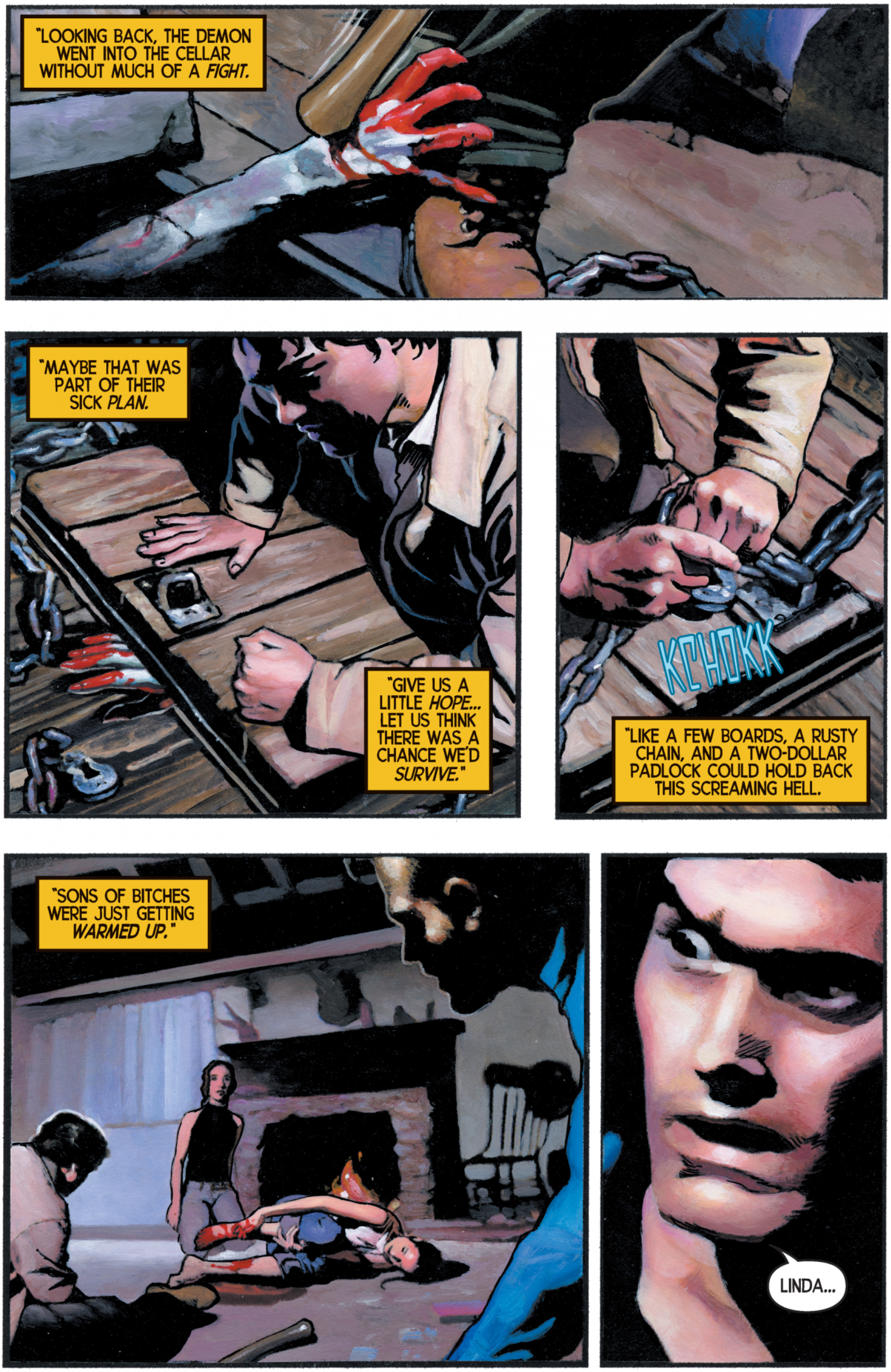

"HAD WE REALLY UNLOCKED SOME MYSTICAL SPELL, ACCIDENTALLY RELEASING *DEMONIC FORCES* INTO OUR WORLD?"
EEEEYAAHHH!!!
"NOTHING ELSE MADE ANY *SENSE.*"
SPTCH
EEAAAUUGHH!
"CHERYL WOULD NEVER HURT *LINDA,* SO *WHATEVER* WAS HAPPENING, TWO THINGS WERE OBVIOUS.
"IT WAS TIME TO HIDE THE REST OF THE *PENCILS*...

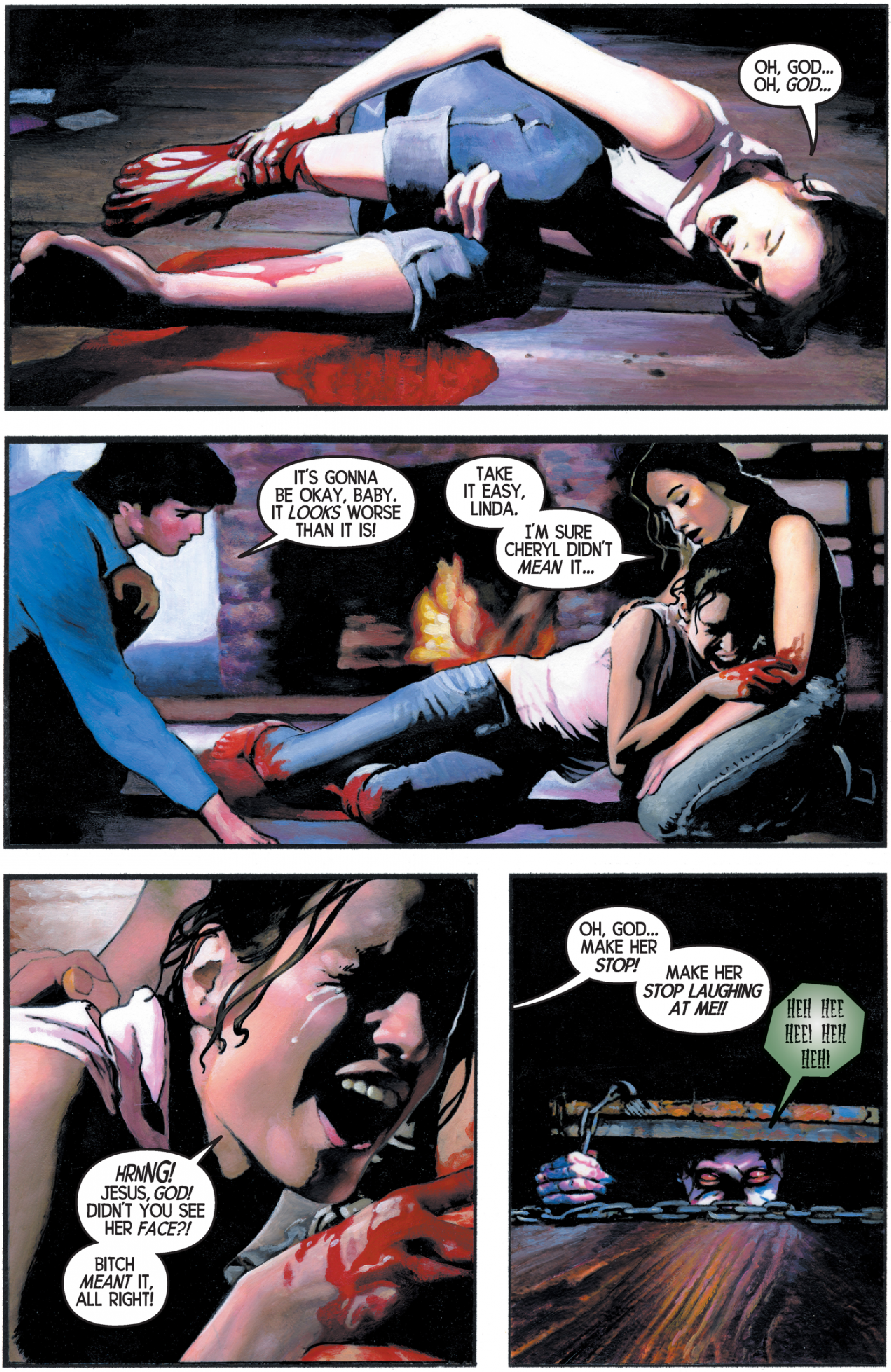

FWWKMP
"...AND CHERYL WASN'T *CHERYL* ANYMORE."
UMMPHH!
"AND IF WHATEVER SHE HAD BECOME COULD DO THAT TO *LINDA*...
"...WHAT WOULD THIS BITCH DO TO *ME?*

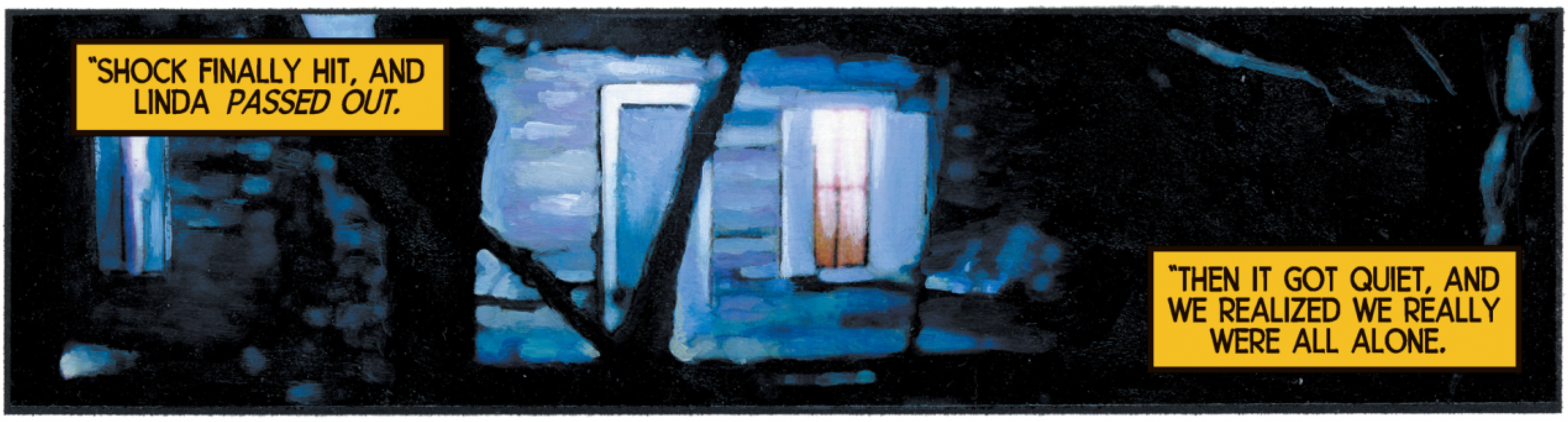

"LUCKY FOR ME, SCOTTY TURNED THAT INTO A *RHETORICAL* QUESTION."
KRAK
STOP IT!

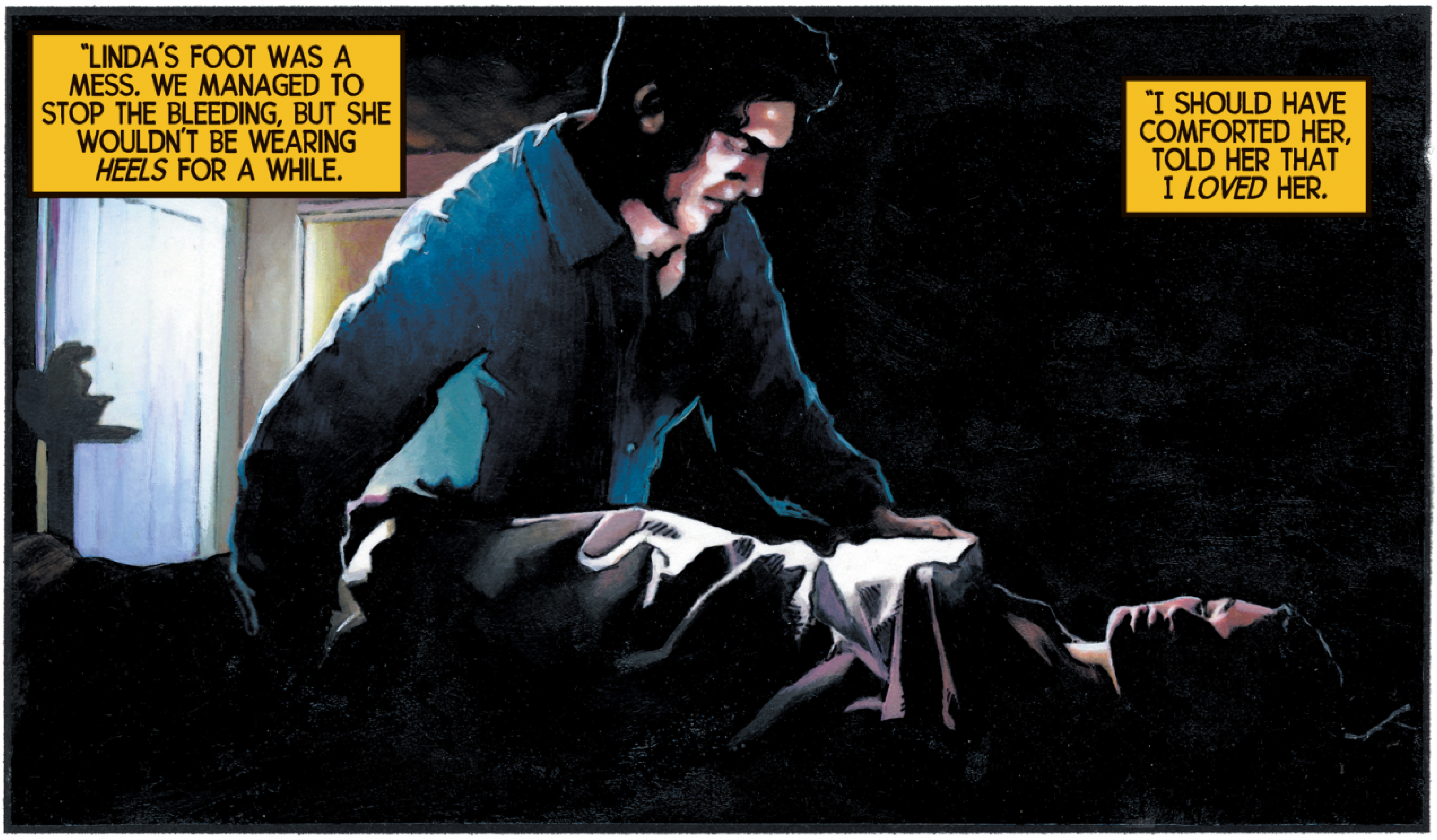

"GOTTA GIVE CREDIT WHERE CREDIT IS DUE. THE *HELL-WHORE* MANAGED TO ACCOMPLISH SOMETHING I'D BEEN TRYING FOR OVER *TEN YEARS...*"
GGGGHHHHGGGEEE...

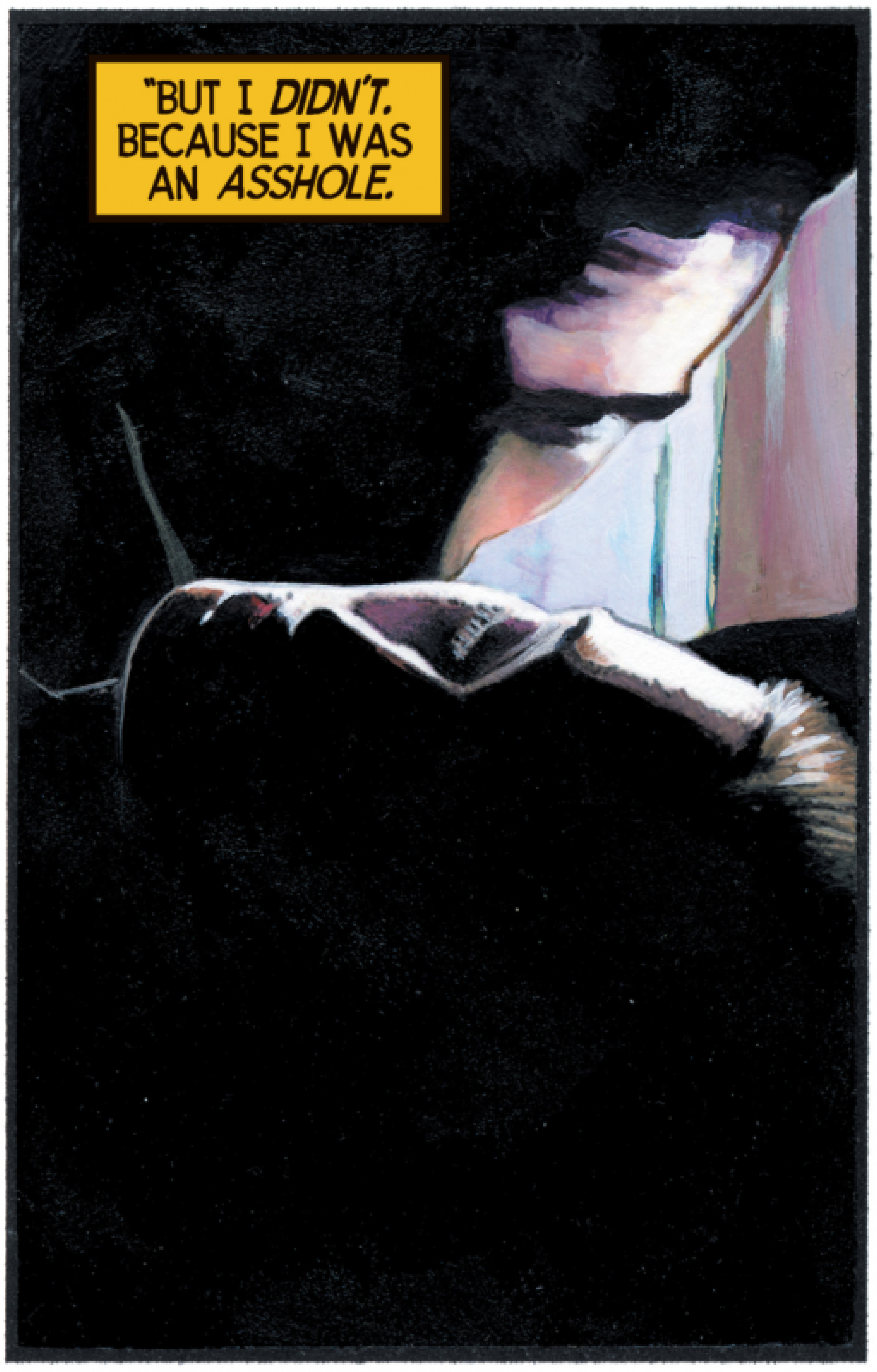

"SHE FINALLY GOT *SCOTTY* TO SHUT HIS *PIE-HOLE!*"
PNNT

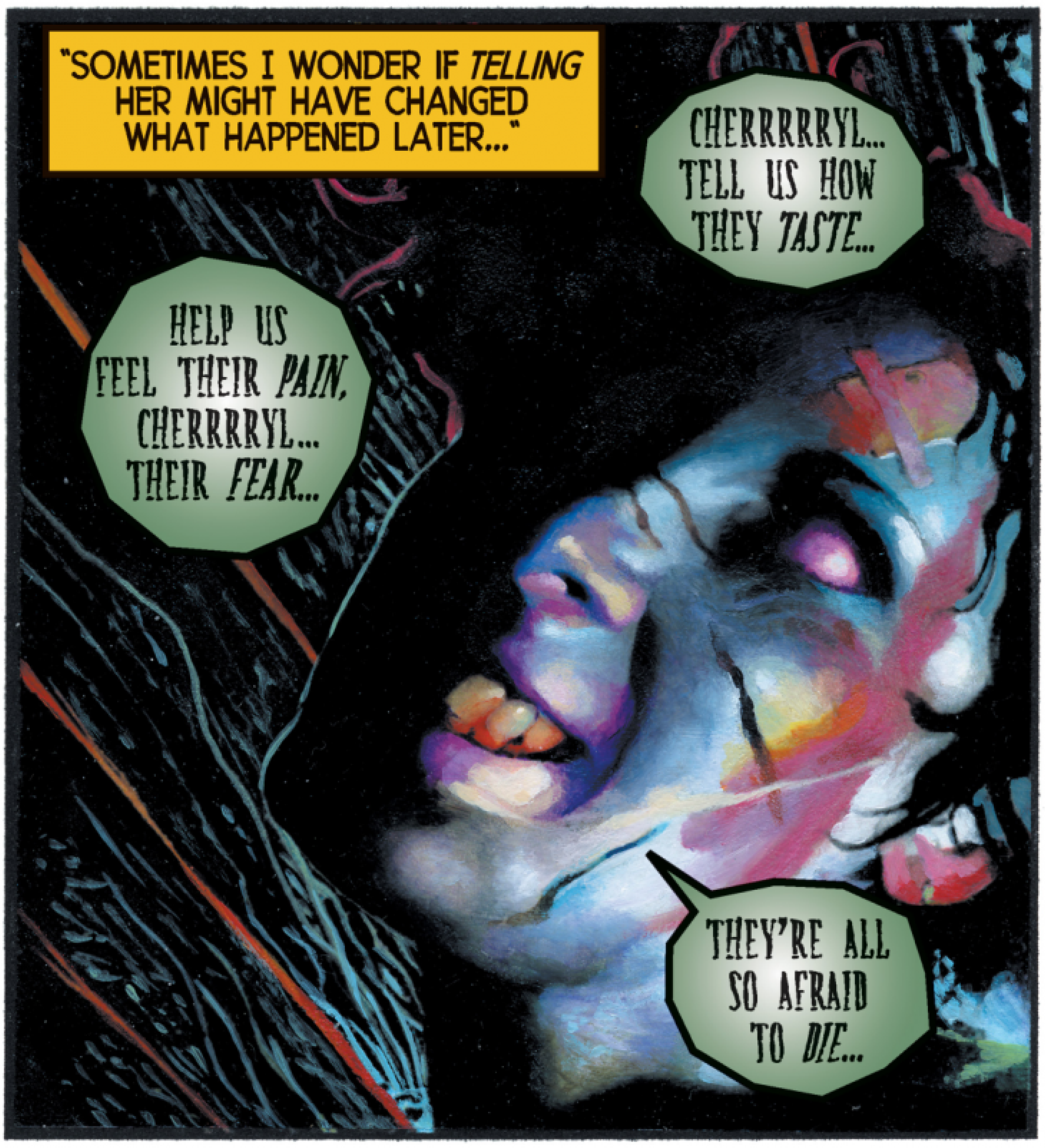

"LOOKING BACK, THE DEMON WENT INTO THE CELLAR WITHOUT MUCH OF A *FIGHT.*
"MAYBE THAT WAS PART OF THEIR SICK *PLAN.*
"GIVE US A LITTLE *HOPE*... LET US THINK THERE WAS A CHANCE WE'D *SURVIVE.*"
KCHOKK
"LIKE A FEW BOARDS, A RUSTY CHAIN, AND A TWO-DOLLAR PADLOCK COULD HOLD BACK THIS SCREAMING HELL.
"SONS OF BITCHES WERE JUST GETTING *WARMED UP.*"
LINDA...

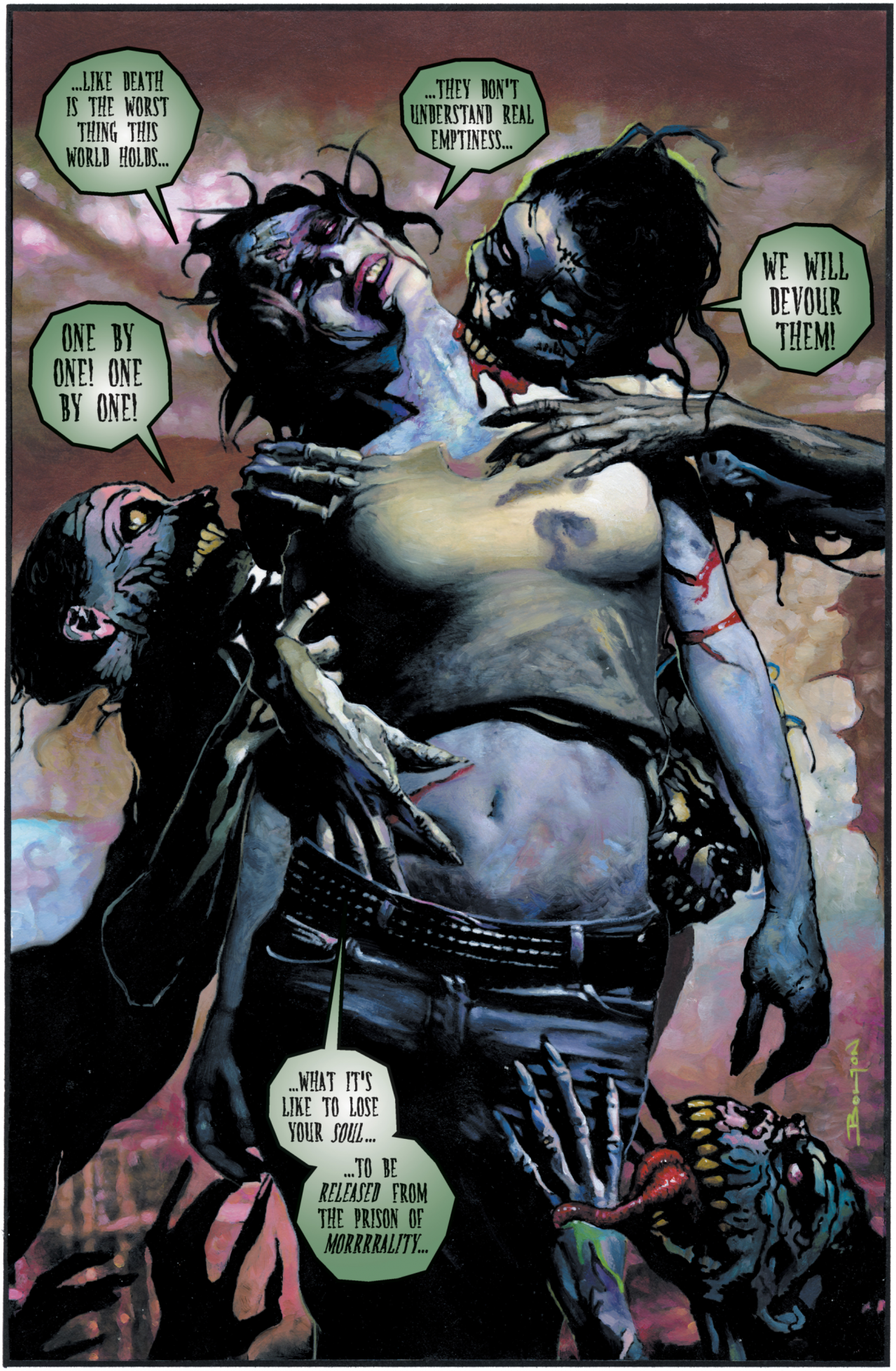

OH, GOD... OH, *GOD*...
IT'S GONNA BE OKAY, BABY. IT *LOOKS* WORSE THAN IT IS!
TAKE IT EASY, LINDA.
I'M SURE CHERYL DIDN'T *MEAN* IT...
HRNNG! JESUS, *GOD!* DIDN'T YOU SEE HER *FACE?!*
BITCH *MEANT* IT, ALL RIGHT!
OH, GOD... MAKE HER *STOP!*
MAKE HER *STOP LAUGHING AT ME!!*
HEH HEE HEE! HEH HEH!

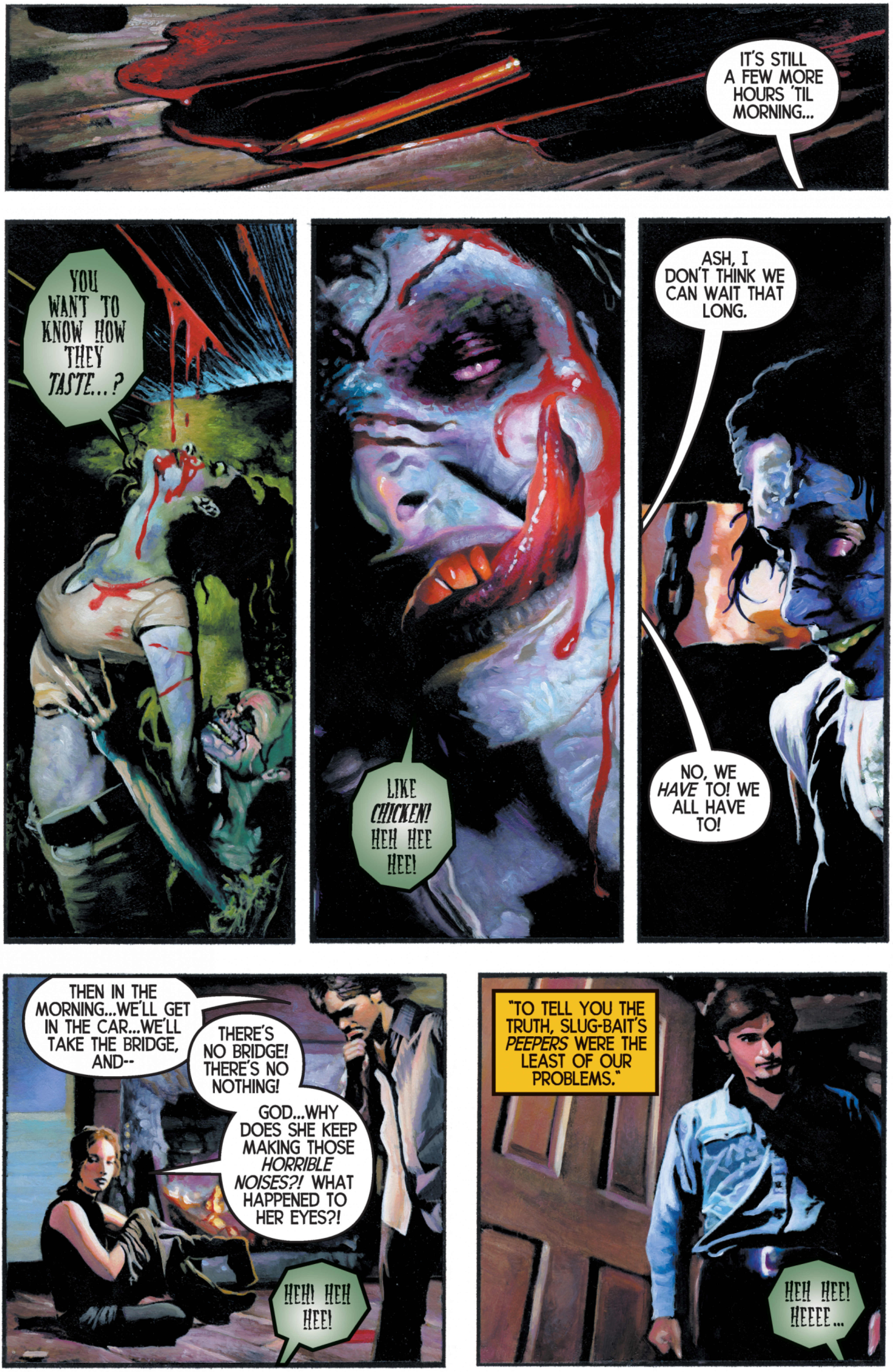

"SHOCK FINALLY HIT, AND LINDA *PASSED OUT.*
"THEN IT GOT QUIET, AND WE REALIZED WE REALLY WERE ALL ALONE.

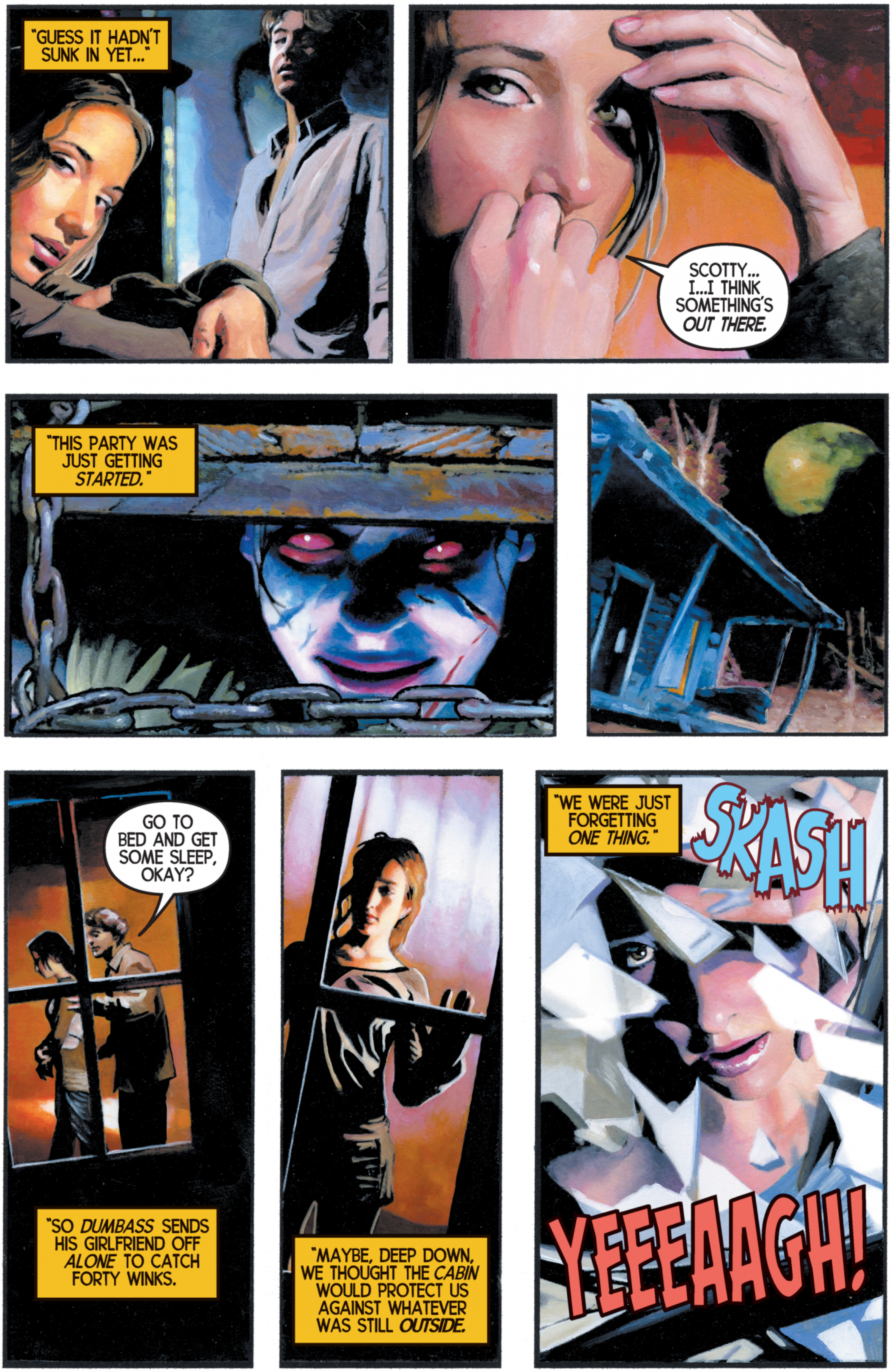

"LINDA'S FOOT WAS A MESS. WE MANAGED TO STOP THE BLEEDING, BUT SHE WOULDN'T BE WEARING *HEELS* FOR A WHILE.
"I SHOULD HAVE COMFORTED HER, TOLD HER THAT I *LOVED* HER.

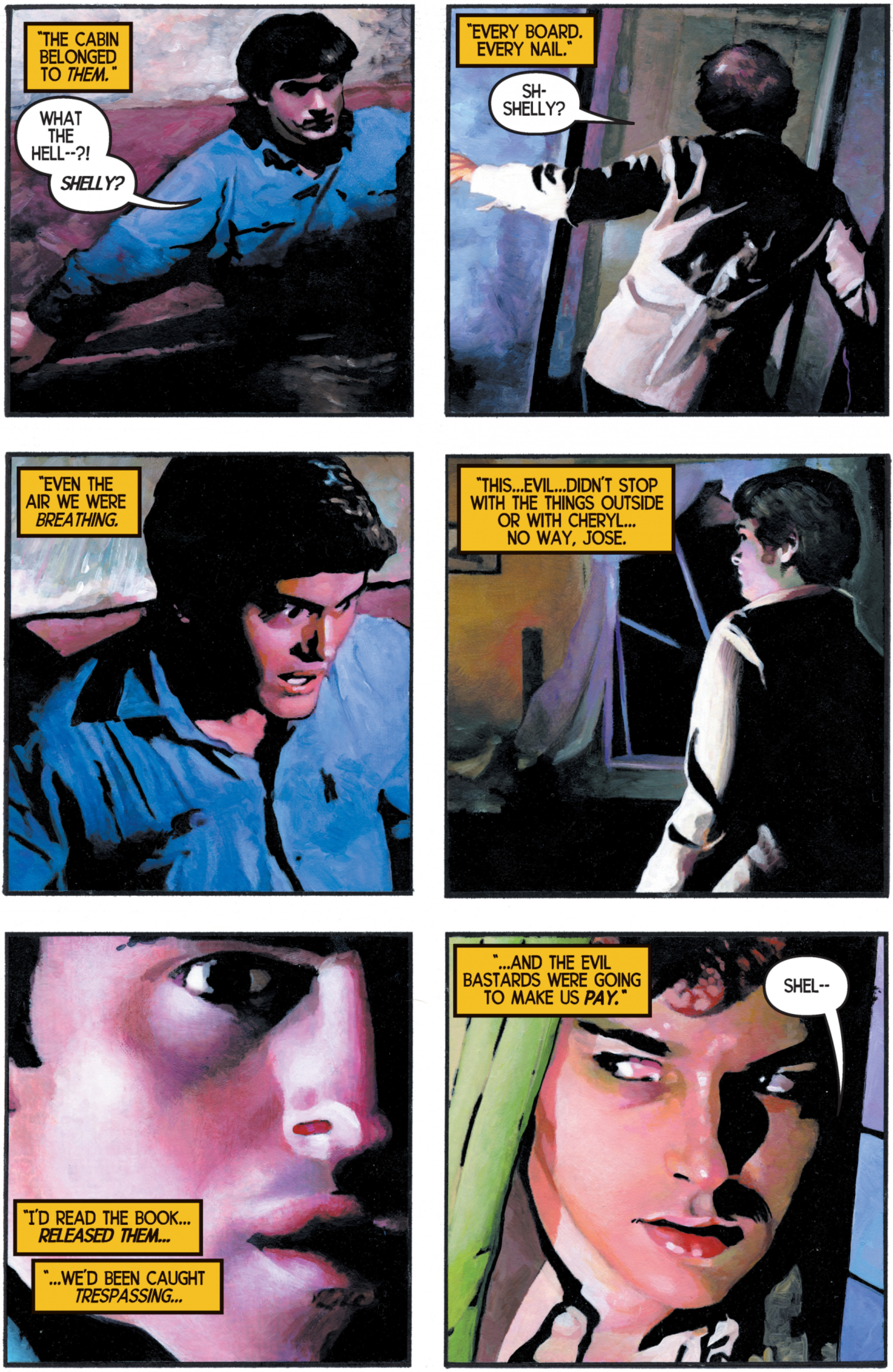

"BUT I *DIDN'T.* BECAUSE I WAS AN *ASSHOLE.*

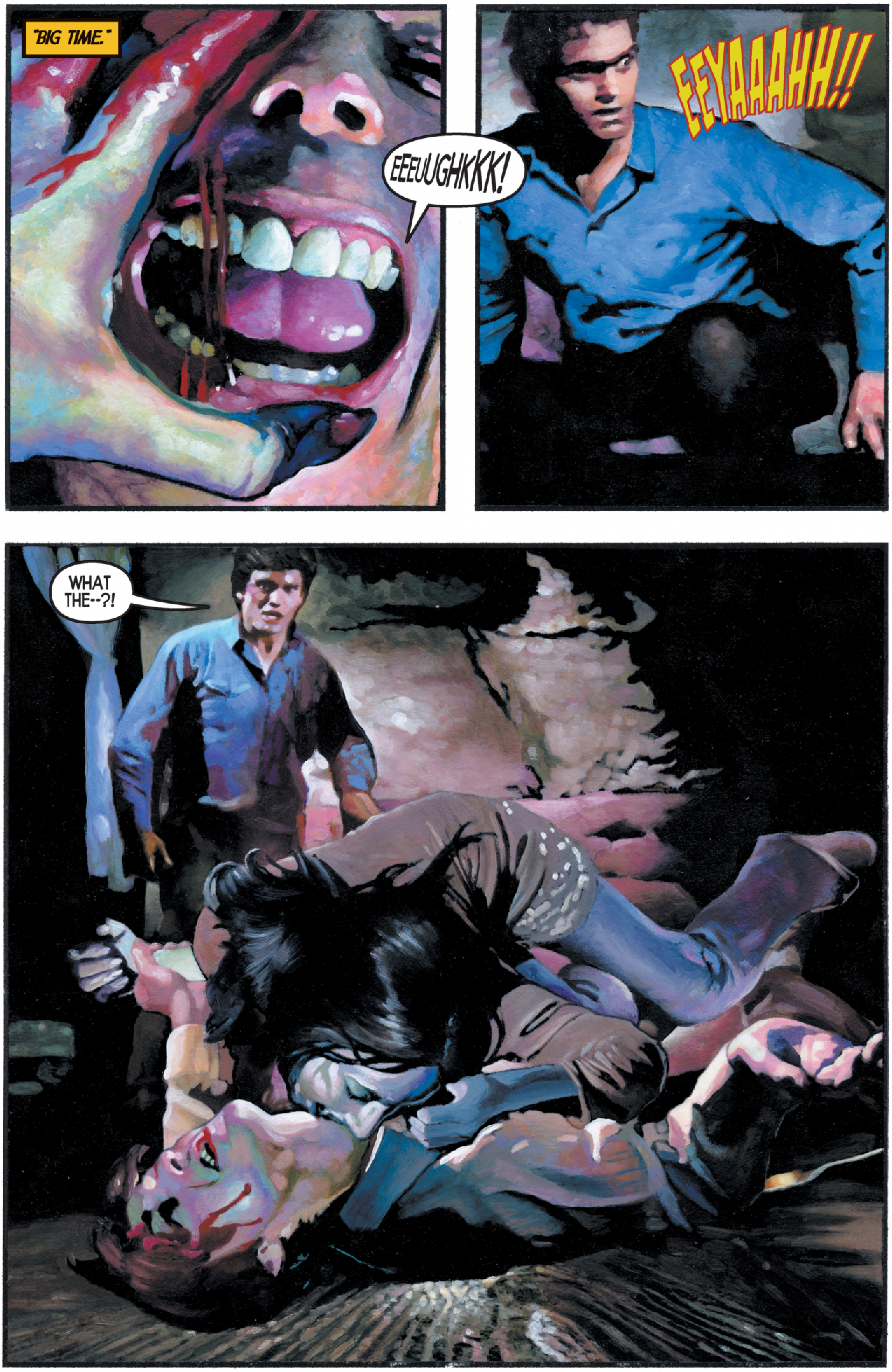

"SOMETIMES I WONDER IF *TELLING* HER MIGHT HAVE CHANGED WHAT HAPPENED LATER..."
CHERRRRYL... TELL US HOW THEY *TASTE*...
HELP US FEEL THEIR *PAIN,* CHERRRRYL... THEIR *FEAR*...
THEY'RE ALL SO AFRAID TO *DIE*...

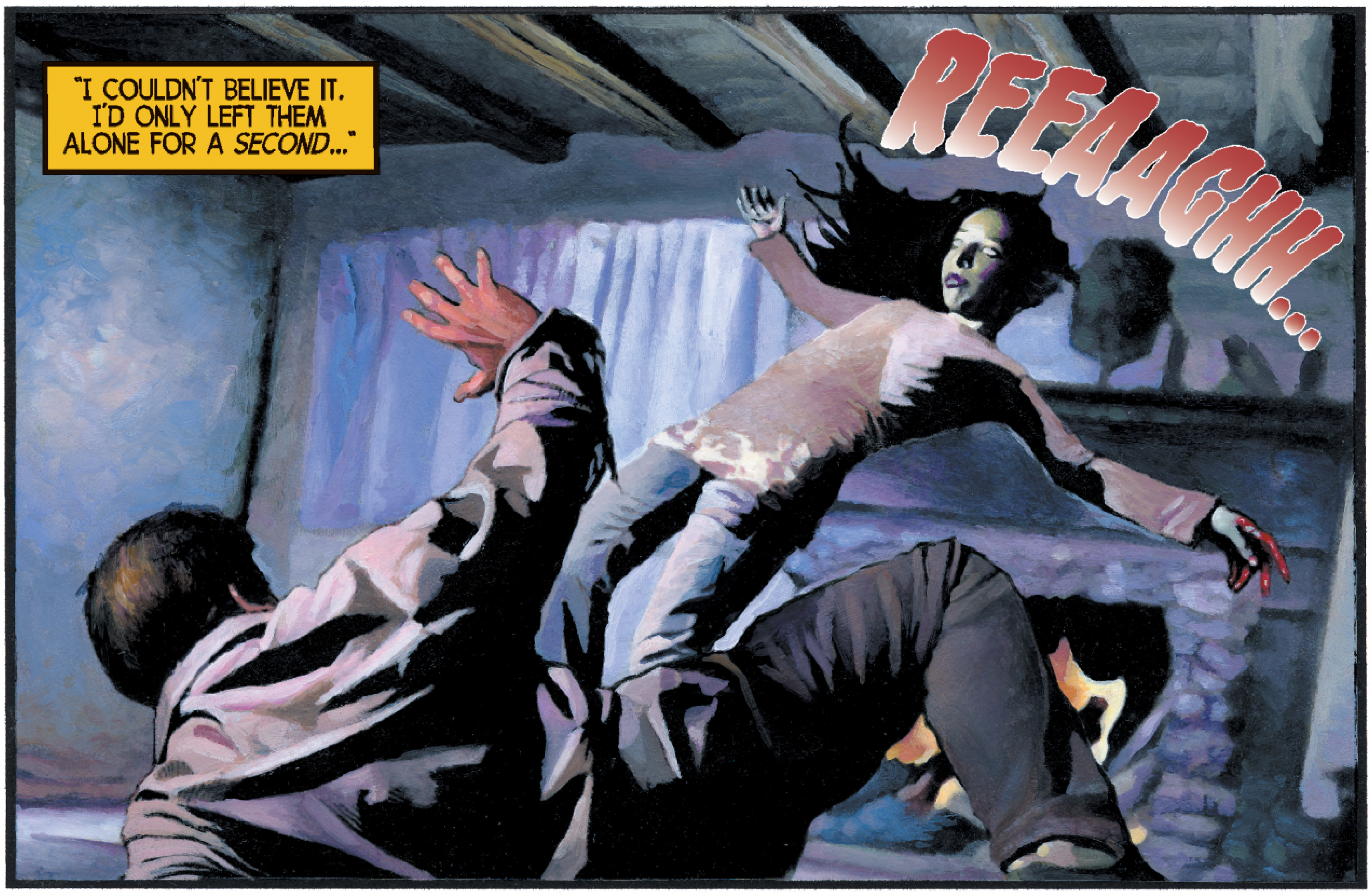

...LIKE DEATH IS THE WORST THING THIS WORLD HOLDS...
...THEY DON'T UNDERSTAND REAL EMPTINESS...
WE WILL DEVOUR THEM!
ONE BY ONE! ONE BY ONE!
...WHAT IT'S LIKE TO LOSE YOUR *SOUL*...
...TO BE *RELEASED* FROM THE PRISON OF *MORRRRALITY*...
BOLTON

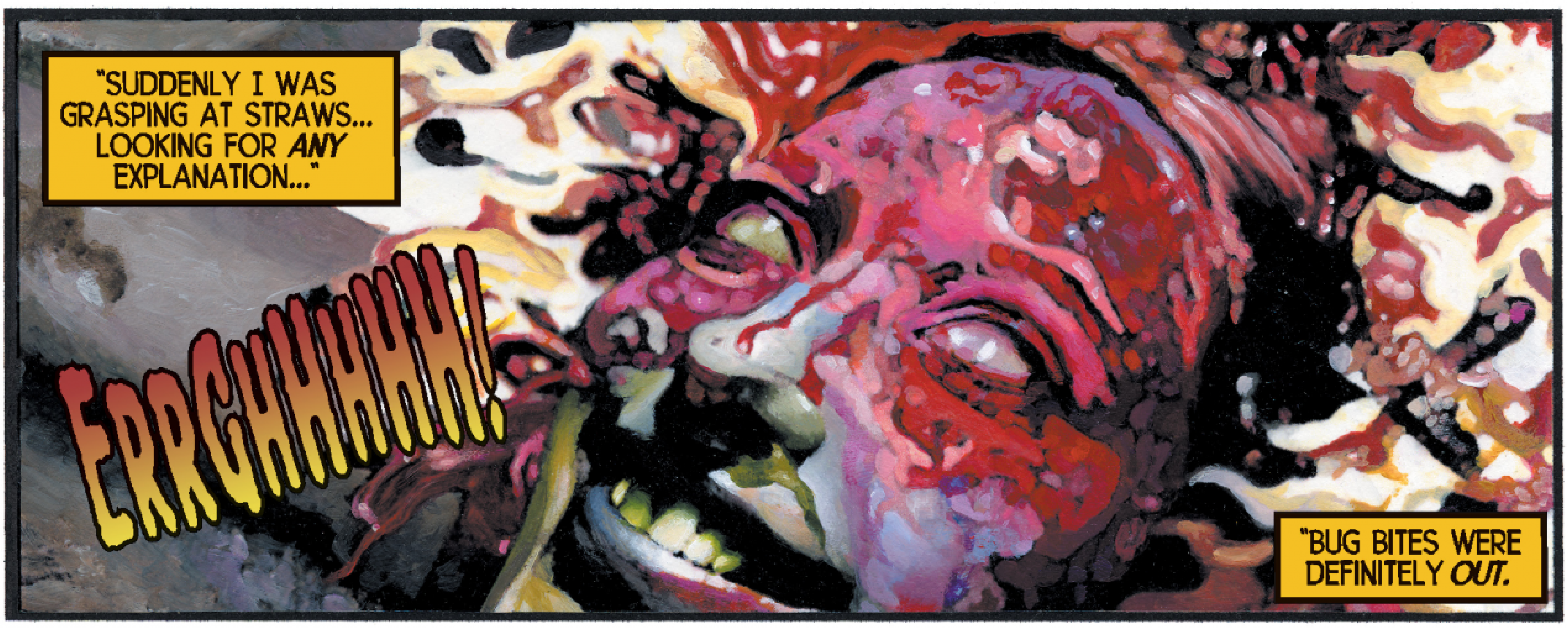

IT'S STILL A FEW MORE HOURS 'TIL MORNING...
YOU WANT TO KNOW HOW THEY *TASTE*...?
LIKE *CHICKEN!* HEH HEE HEE!
ASH, I DON'T THINK WE CAN WAIT THAT LONG.
NO, WE *HAVE* TO! WE ALL HAVE TO!
THEN IN THE MORNING...WE'LL GET IN THE CAR...WE'LL TAKE THE BRIDGE, AND--
THERE'S NO BRIDGE! THERE'S NO NOTHING!
GOD...WHY DOES SHE KEEP MAKING THOSE *HORRIBLE NOISES?!* WHAT HAPPENED TO HER EYES?!
HEH! HEH HEE!
"TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH, SLUG-BAIT'S *PEEPERS* WERE THE LEAST OF OUR PROBLEMS."
HEH HEE! HEEEE...

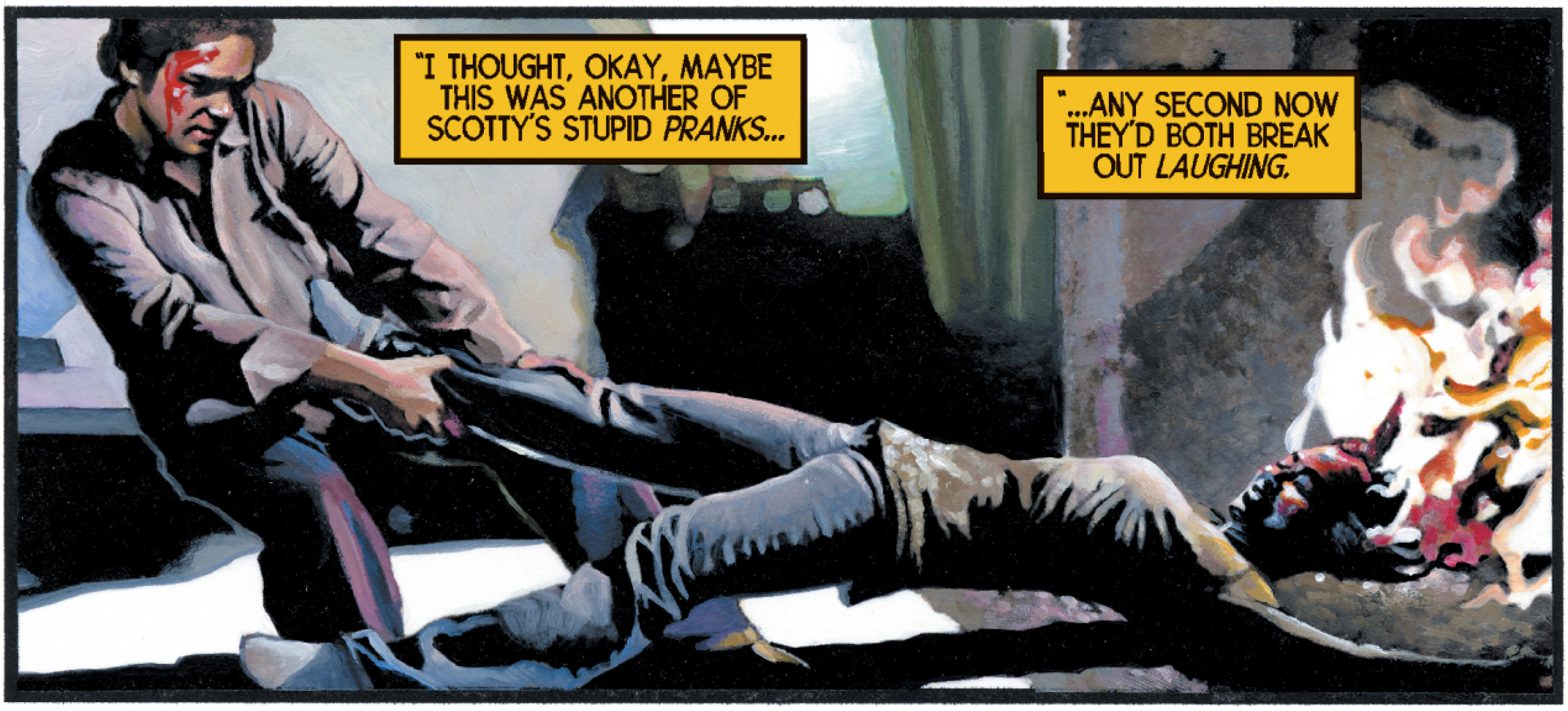

"GUESS IT HADN'T SUNK IN YET..."
SCOTTY... I...I THINK SOMETHING'S *OUT THERE.*
"THIS PARTY WAS JUST GETTING *STARTED.*"
GO TO BED AND GET SOME SLEEP, OKAY?
"SO *DUMBASS* SENDS HIS GIRLFRIEND OFF *ALONE* TO CATCH FORTY WINKS.
"MAYBE, DEEP DOWN, WE THOUGHT THE *CABIN* WOULD PROTECT US AGAINST WHATEVER WAS STILL *OUTSIDE.*
"WE WERE JUST FORGETTING *ONE THING.*"
SKASH
YEEEAAGH!

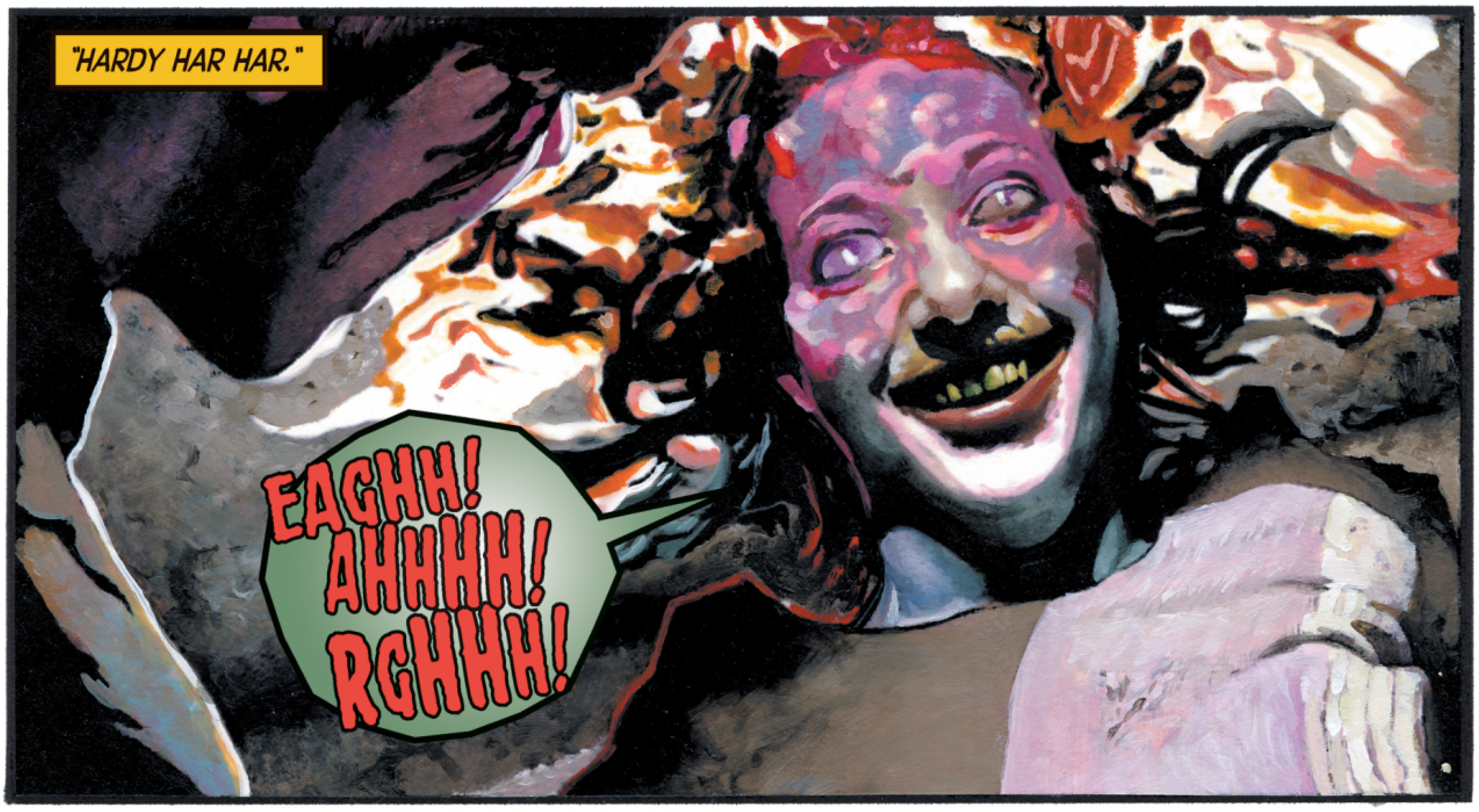

"THE CABIN BELONGED TO *THEM.*"
WHAT THE HELL--?! *SHELLY?*
"EVERY BOARD. EVERY NAIL."
SH- SHELLY?
"EVEN THE AIR WE WERE *BREATHING.*
"THIS...EVIL...DIDN'T STOP WITH THE THINGS OUTSIDE OR WITH CHERYL... NO WAY, JOSE.
"I'D READ THE BOOK... *RELEASED THEM...*
"...WE'D BEEN CAUGHT *TRESPASSING...*
"...AND THE EVIL BASTARDS WERE GOING TO MAKE US *PAY.*"
SHEL--

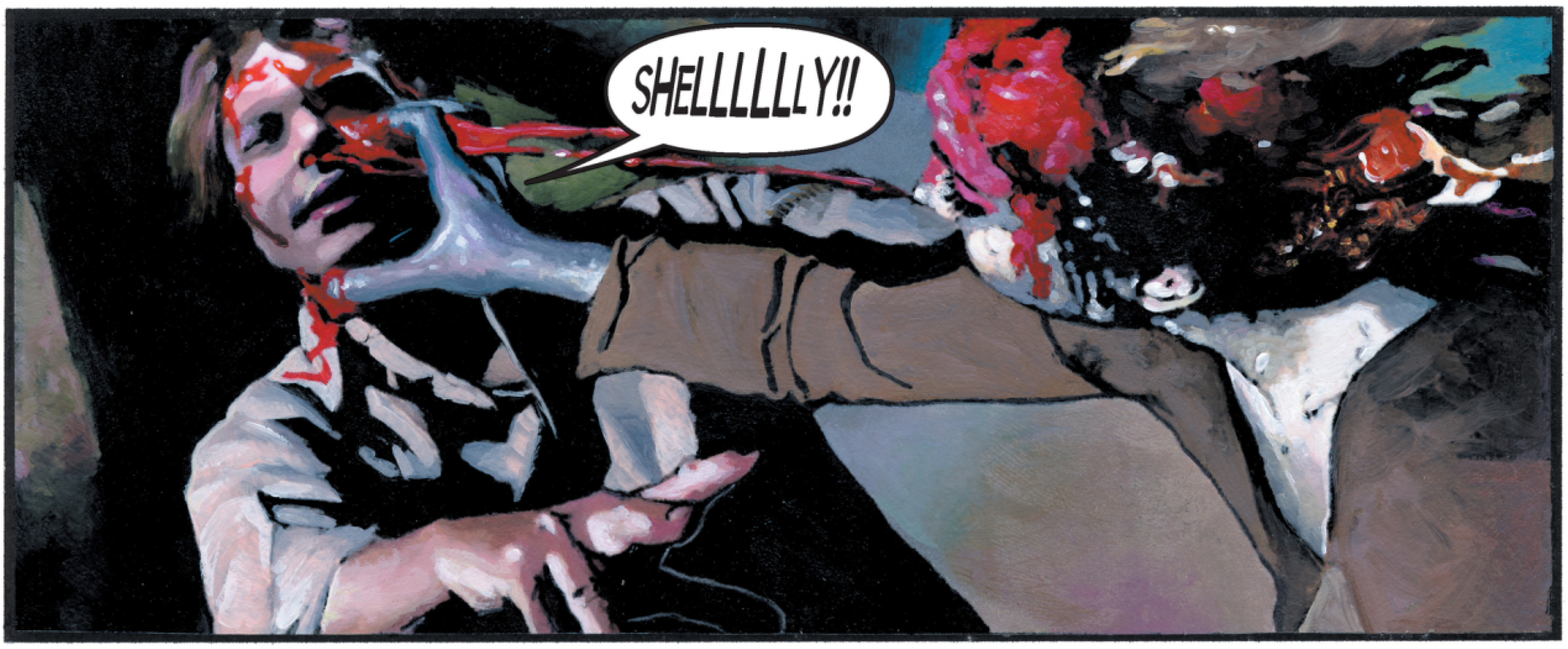

"BIG TIME."
EEEUUGHKKK!
EEYAAAHH!!
WHAT THE--?!

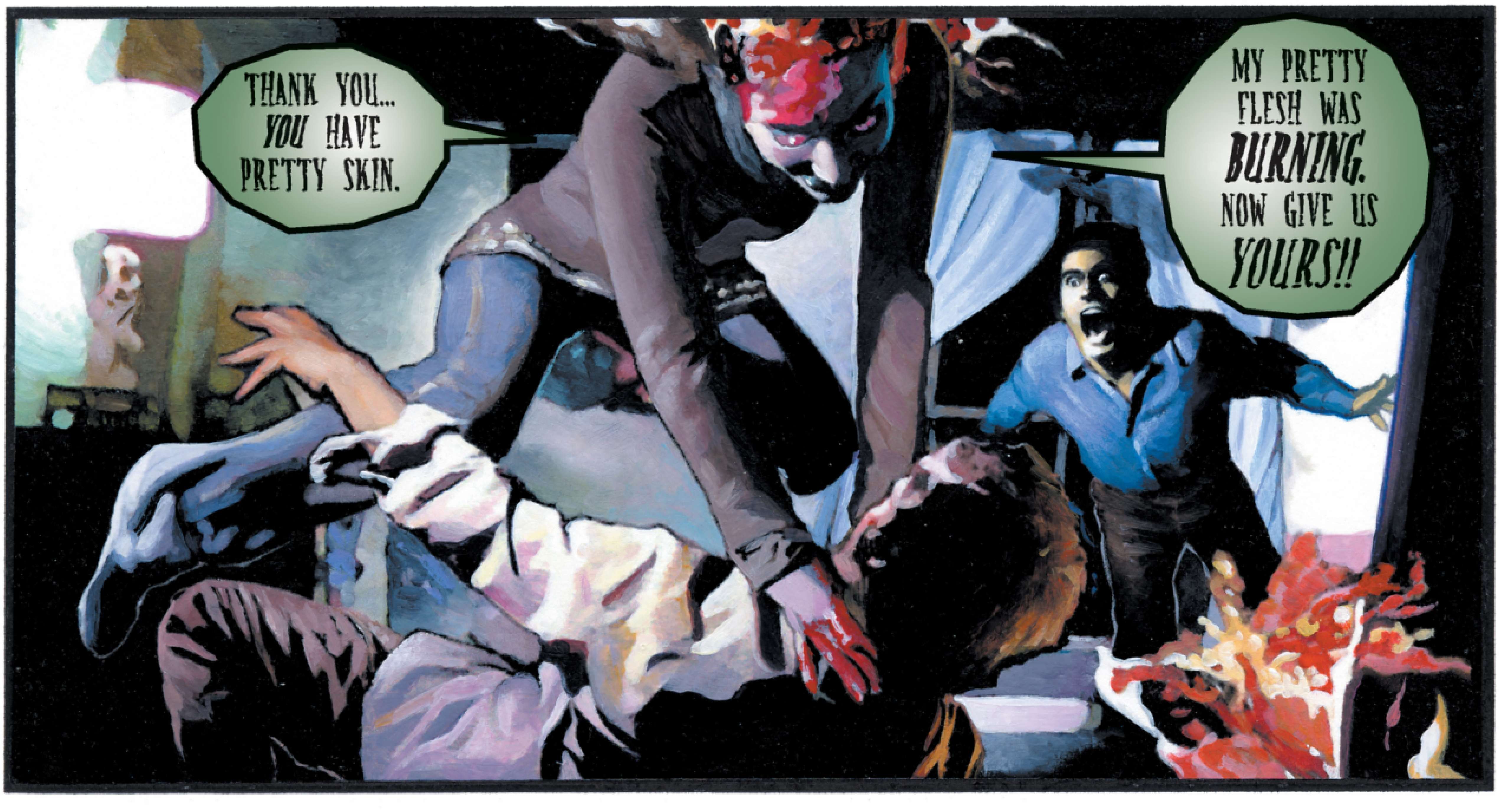

"I COULDN'T BELIEVE IT. I'D ONLY LEFT THEM ALONE FOR A *SECOND*..."
REEAAGHH...

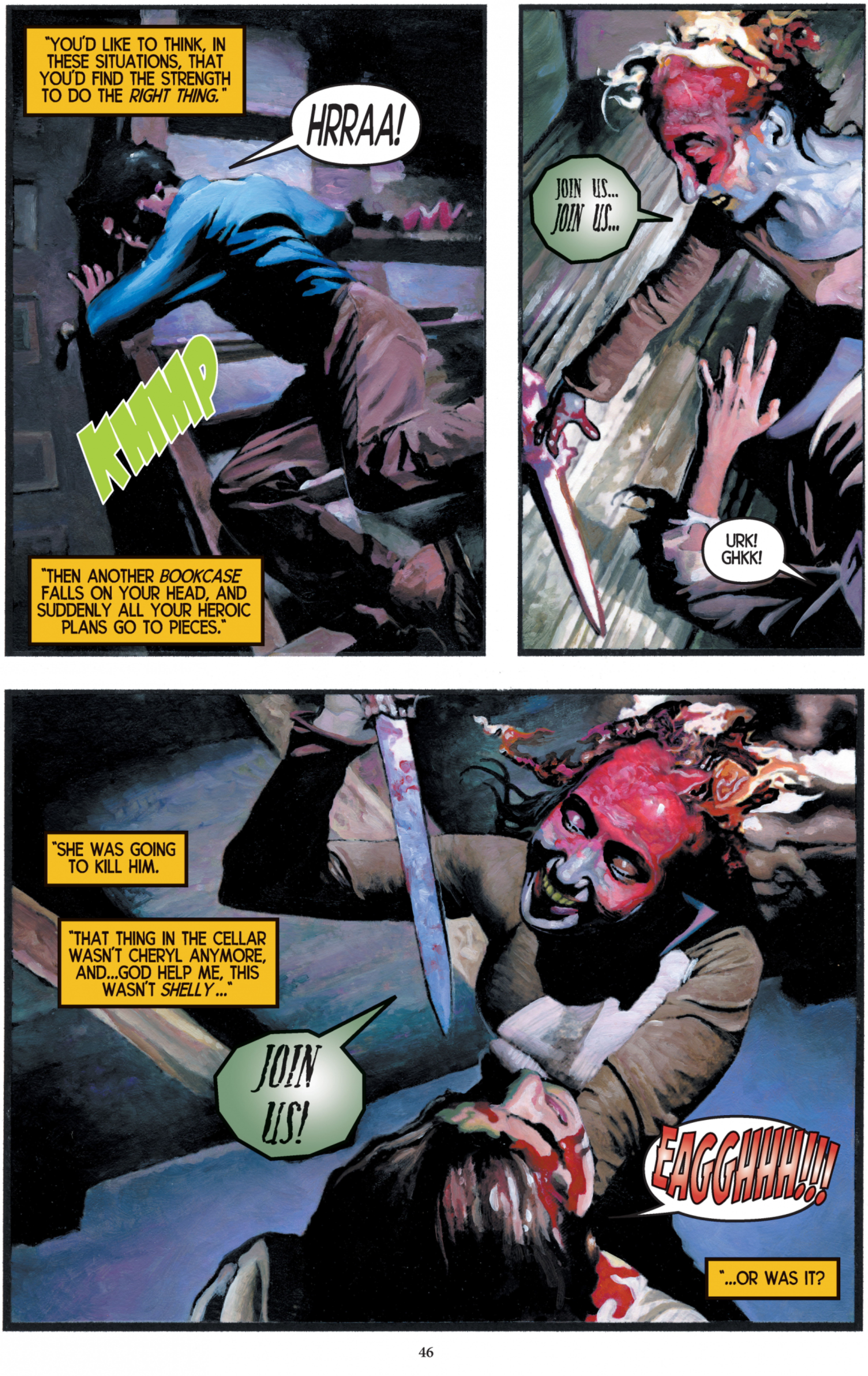

"SUDDENLY I WAS GRASPING AT STRAWS... LOOKING FOR *ANY* EXPLANATION..."
ERRGHHHHH!
"BUG BITES WERE DEFINITELY *OUT*.

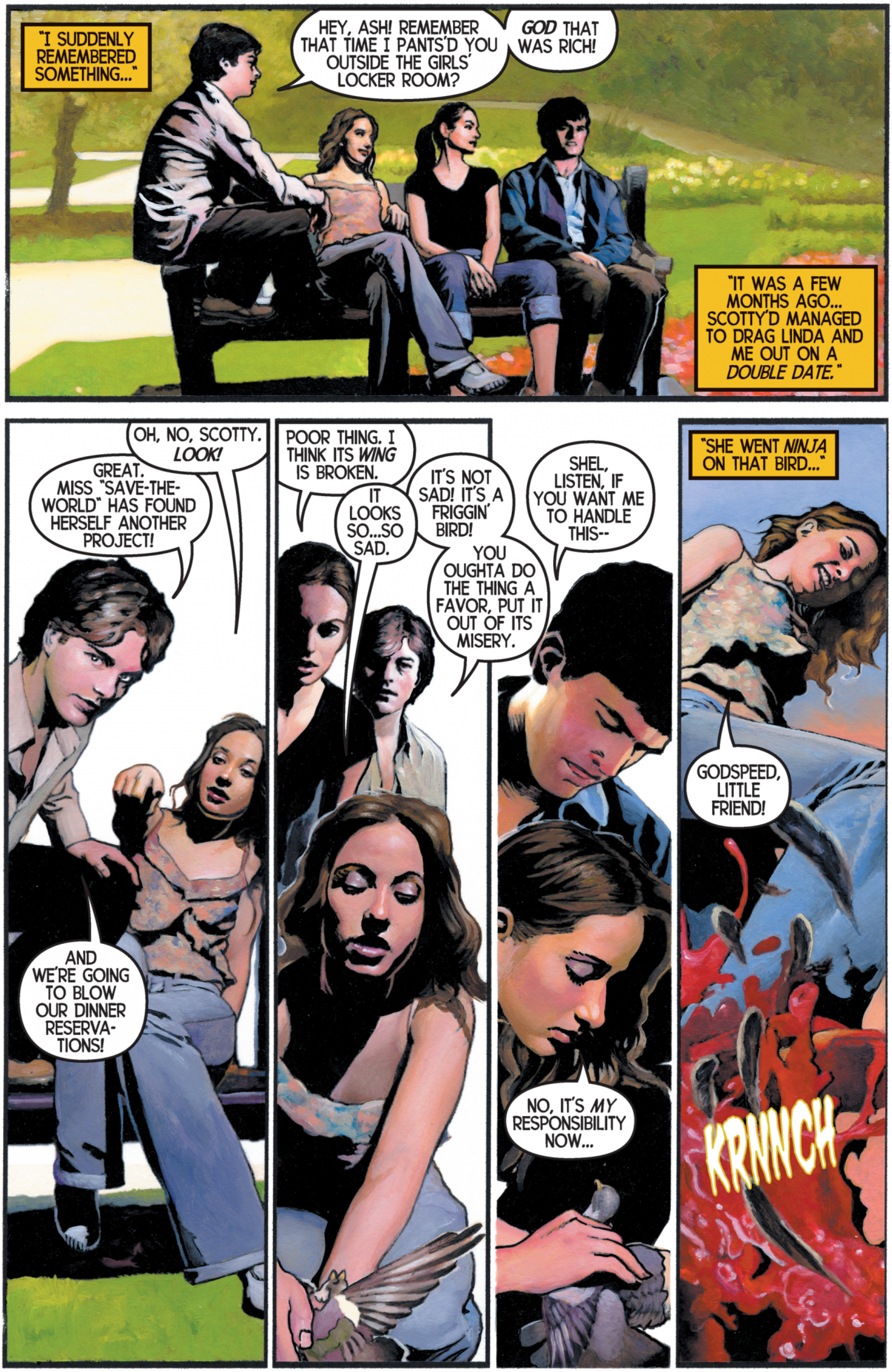

"I THOUGHT, OKAY, MAYBE THIS WAS ANOTHER OF SCOTTY'S STUPID *PRANKS*...
"...ANY SECOND NOW THEY'D BOTH BREAK OUT *LAUGHING*.

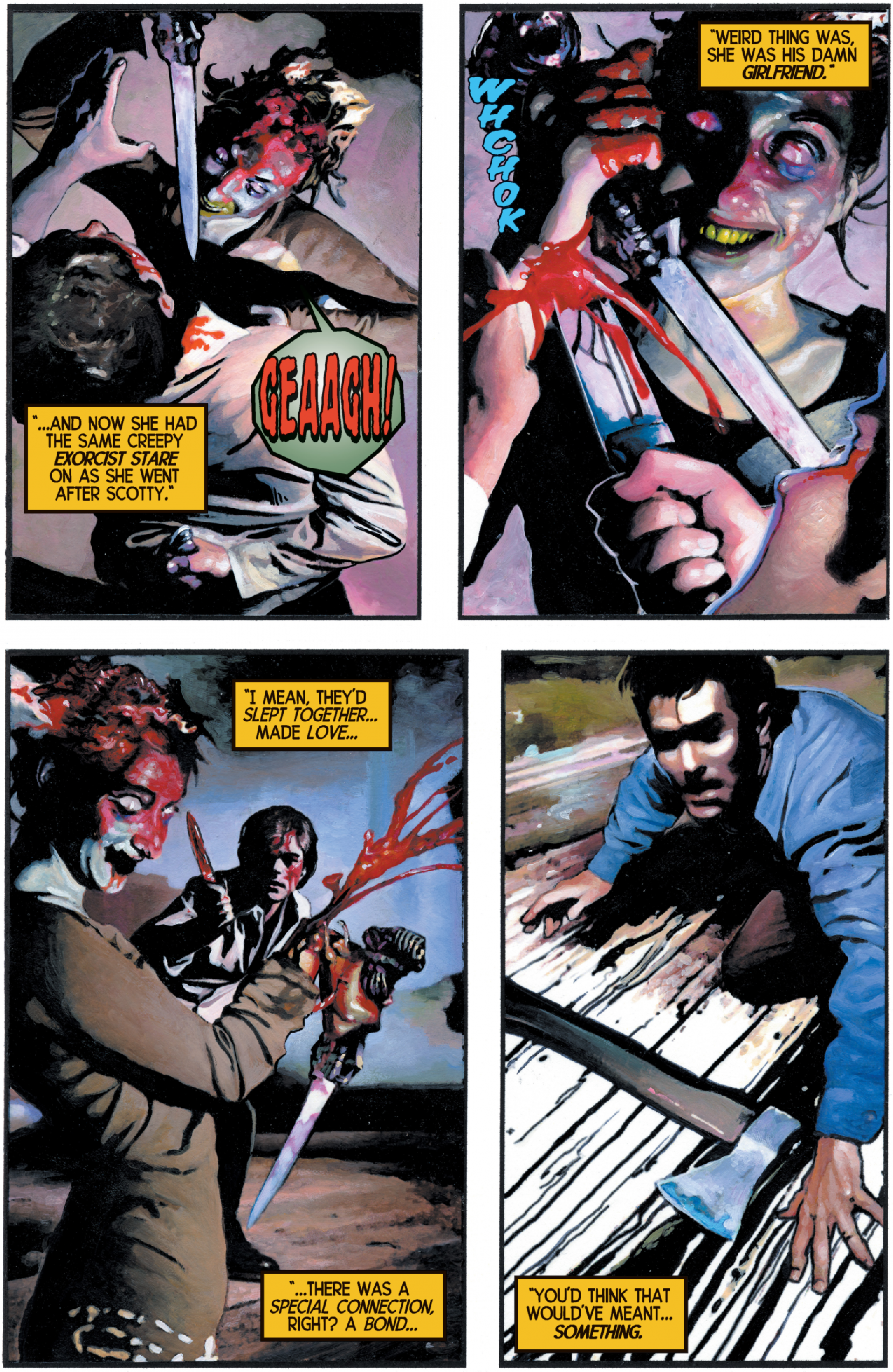

"HARDY HAR HAR."
EAGHH! AHHHH! RGHHH!

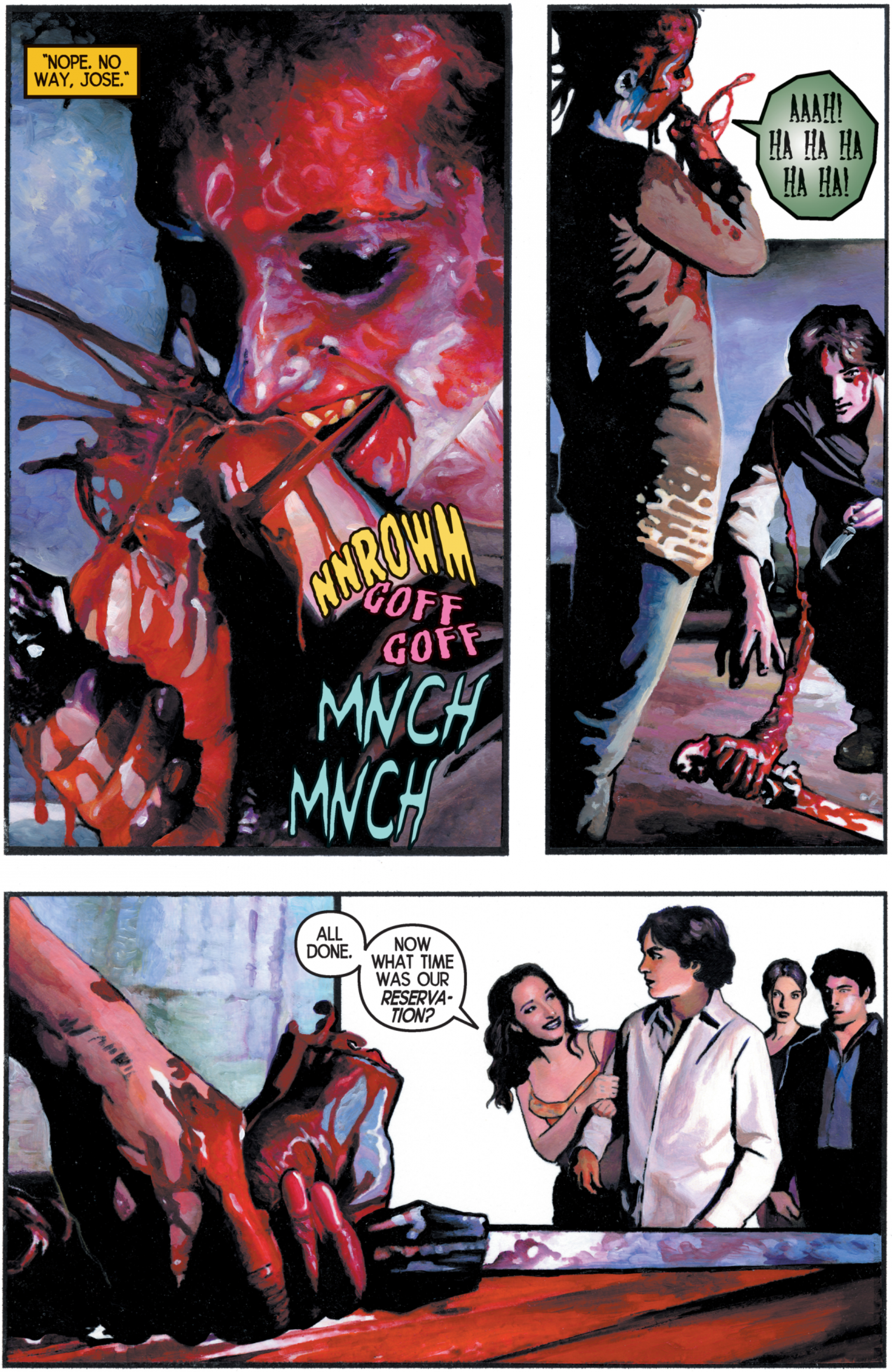

SHELLLLLLY!!

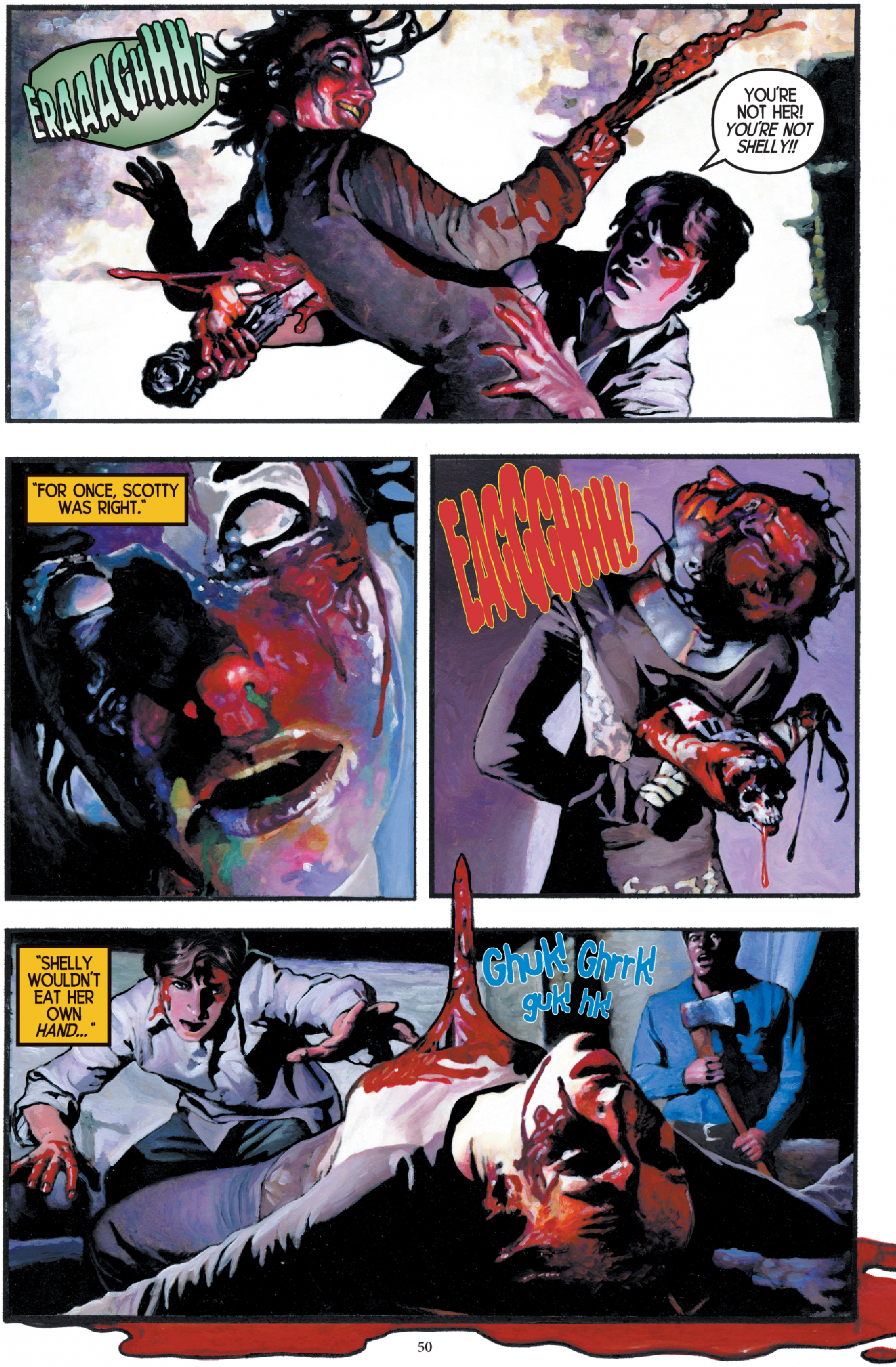

THANK YOU... *YOU* HAVE PRETTY SKIN.
MY PRETTY FLESH WAS **BURNING.** NOW GIVE US *YOURS!!*

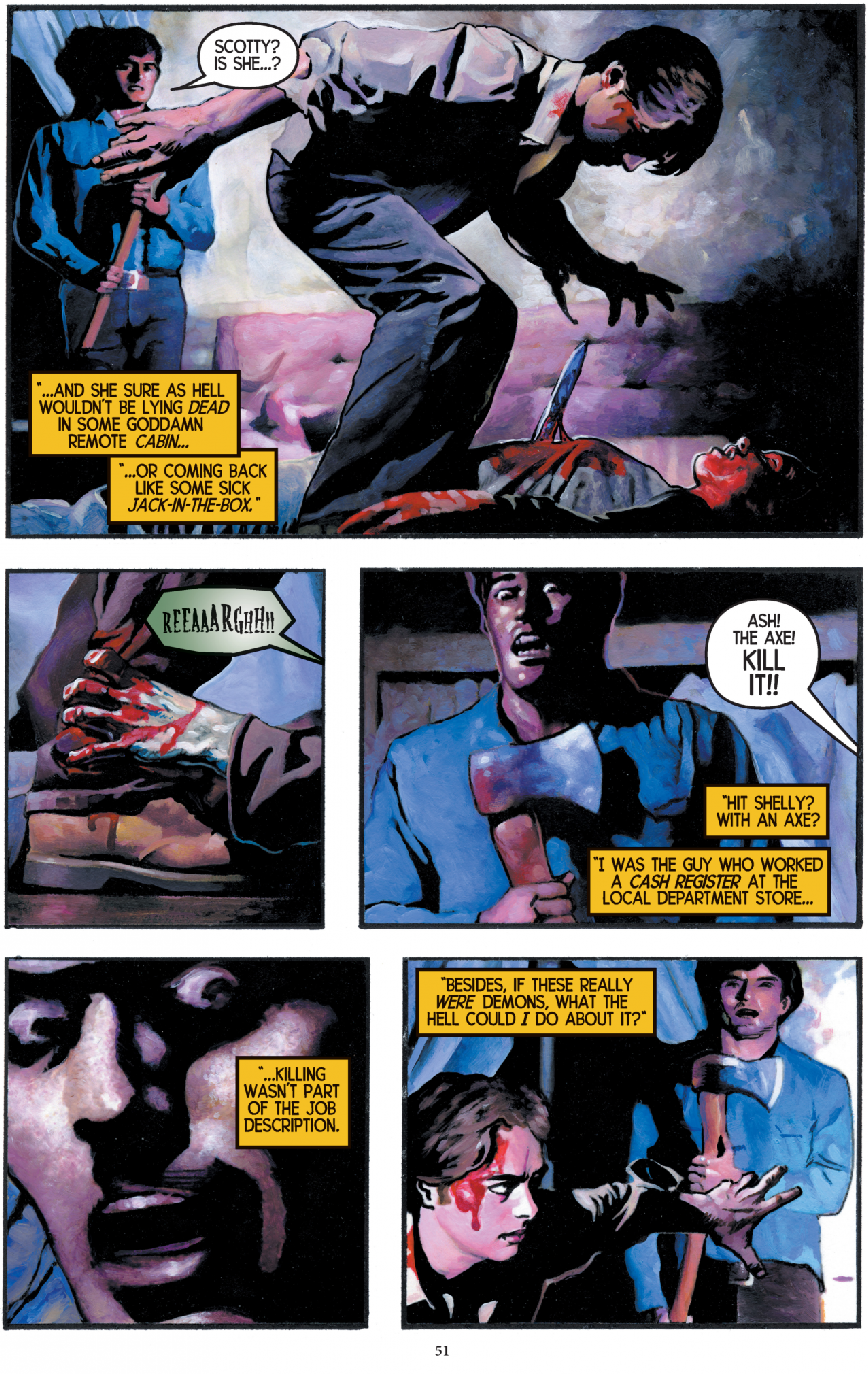

"YOU'D LIKE TO THINK, IN THESE SITUATIONS, THAT YOU'D FIND THE STRENGTH TO DO THE *RIGHT THING.*"
HRRAA!
KMMP
"THEN ANOTHER *BOOKCASE* FALLS ON YOUR HEAD, AND SUDDENLY ALL YOUR HEROIC PLANS GO TO PIECES."
JOIN US... JOIN US...
URK! GHKK!
"SHE WAS GOING TO KILL HIM.
"THAT THING IN THE CELLAR WASN'T CHERYL ANYMORE, AND...GOD HELP ME, THIS WASN'T *SHELLY*..."
JOIN US!
EAGGHHH!!!
"...OR WAS IT?

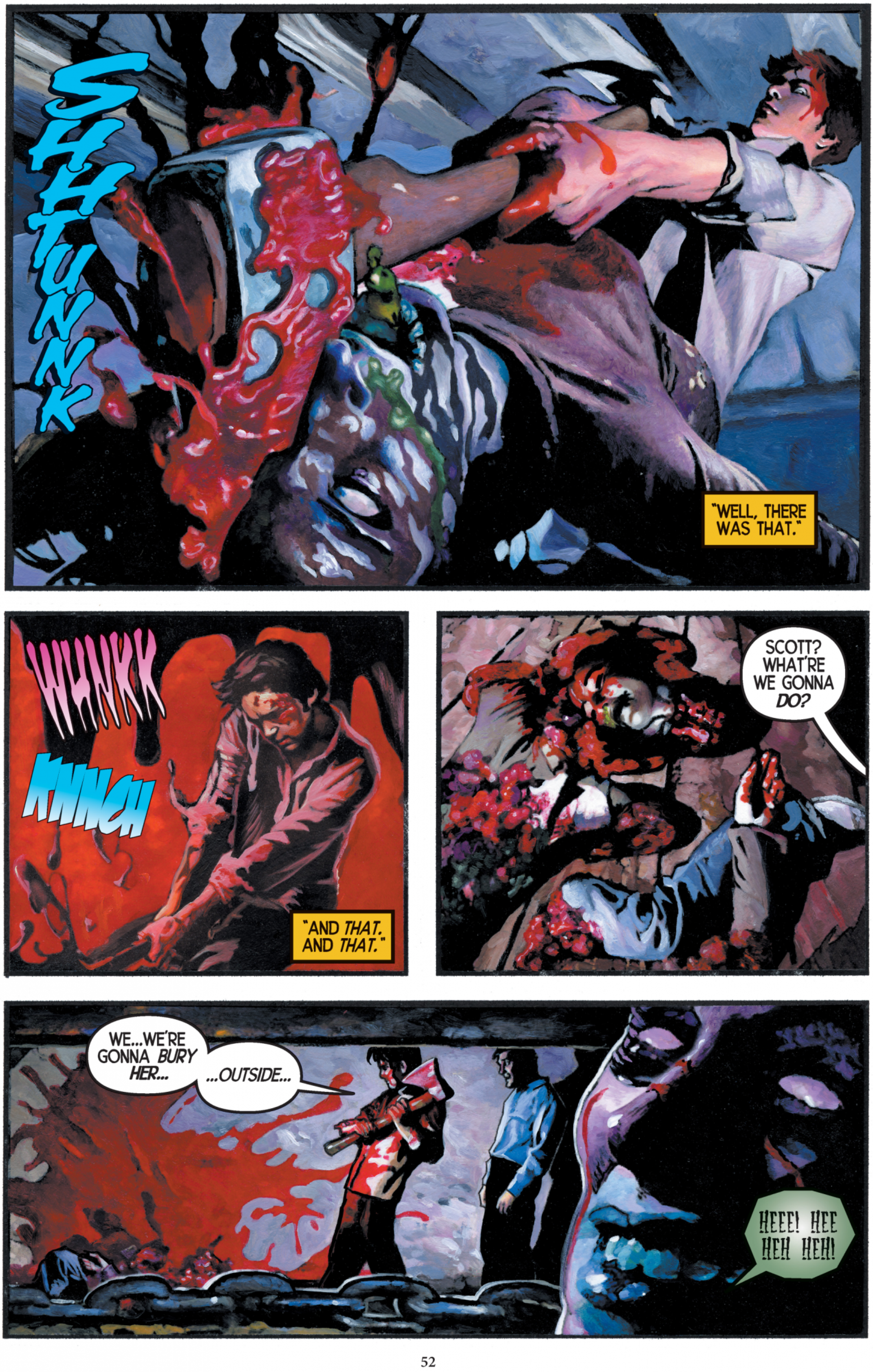

"I SUDDENLY REMEMBERED SOMETHING..."
HEY, ASH! REMEMBER THAT TIME I PANTS'D YOU OUTSIDE THE GIRLS' LOCKER ROOM?
GOD THAT WAS RICH!
"IT WAS A FEW MONTHS AGO... SCOTTY'D MANAGED TO DRAG LINDA AND ME OUT ON A *DOUBLE DATE.*"
OH, NO, SCOTTY. *LOOK!*
GREAT. MISS "SAVE-THE-WORLD" HAS FOUND HERSELF ANOTHER PROJECT!
AND WE'RE GOING TO BLOW OUR DINNER RESERVATIONS!
POOR THING. I THINK ITS *WING* IS BROKEN.
IT LOOKS SO...SO SAD.
IT'S NOT SAD! IT'S A FRIGGIN' BIRD!
YOU OUGHTA DO THE THING A FAVOR, PUT IT OUT OF ITS MISERY.
SHEL, LISTEN, IF YOU WANT ME TO HANDLE THIS--
NO, IT'S *MY* RESPONSIBILITY NOW...
"SHE WENT *NINJA* ON THAT BIRD..."
GODSPEED, LITTLE FRIEND!
KRNNCH


"...AND NOW SHE HAD THE SAME CREEPY *EXORCIST STARE* ON AS SHE WENT AFTER SCOTTY."
GEAAGH!
"WEIRD THING WAS, SHE WAS HIS DAMN *GIRLFRIEND.*"
WHCHOK
"I MEAN, THEY'D *SLEPT TOGETHER*... MADE *LOVE*...
"...THERE WAS A *SPECIAL CONNECTION,* RIGHT? A *BOND*...
"YOU'D THINK THAT WOULD'VE MEANT... *SOMETHING.*

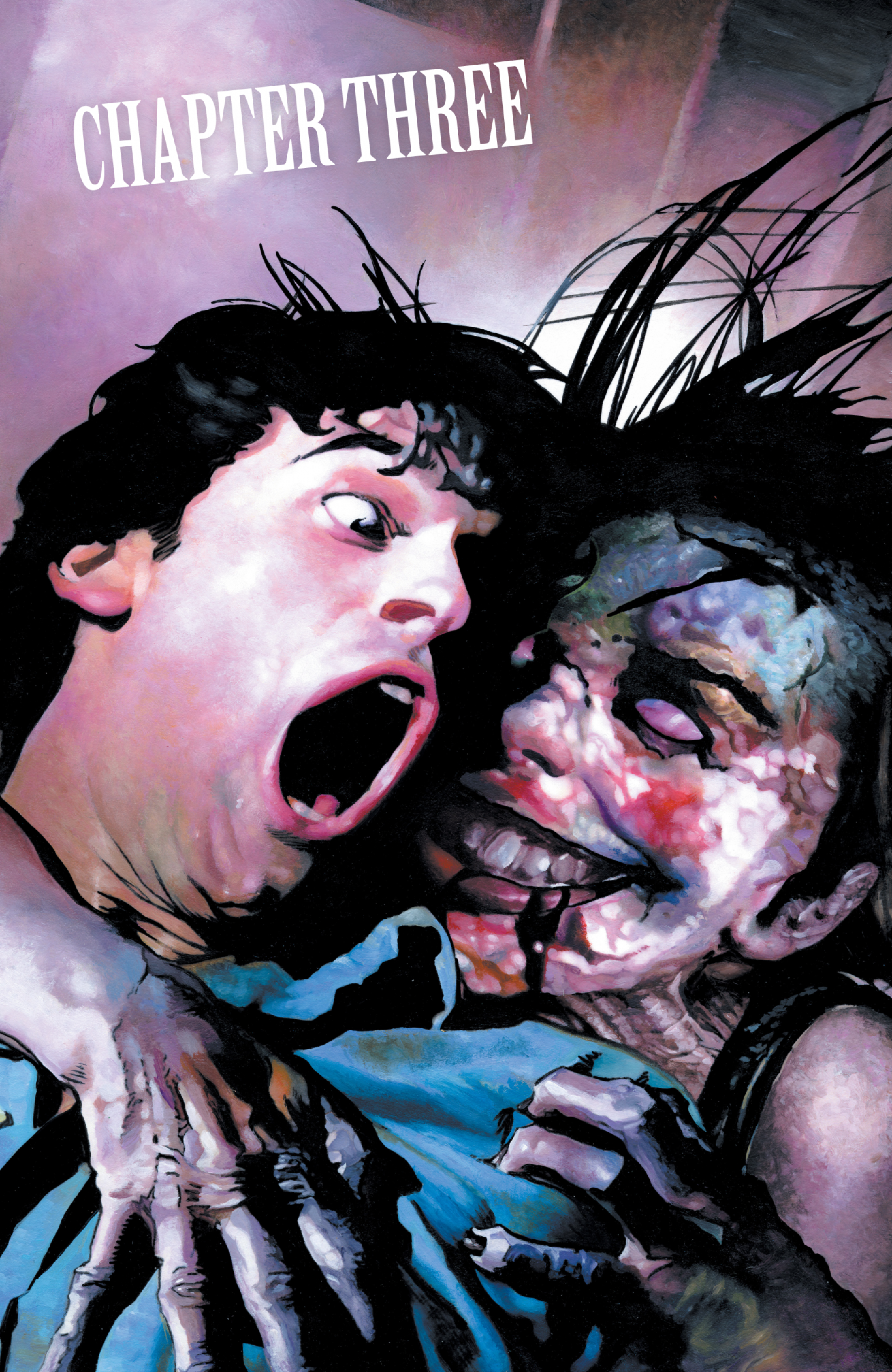

"NOPE. NO WAY, JOSE."
NNROWM
GOFF GOFF
MNCH MNCH
AAAH! HA HA HA HA HA!
ALL DONE.
NOW WHAT TIME WAS OUR *RESERVATION?*


ERAAAGHHH!
YOU'RE NOT HER! *YOU'RE NOT SHELLY!!*
"FOR ONCE, SCOTTY WAS RIGHT."
EAGGGHHH!
"SHELLY WOULDN'T EAT HER OWN *HAND...*"
Ghuk! Ghrrk! guk! hk!

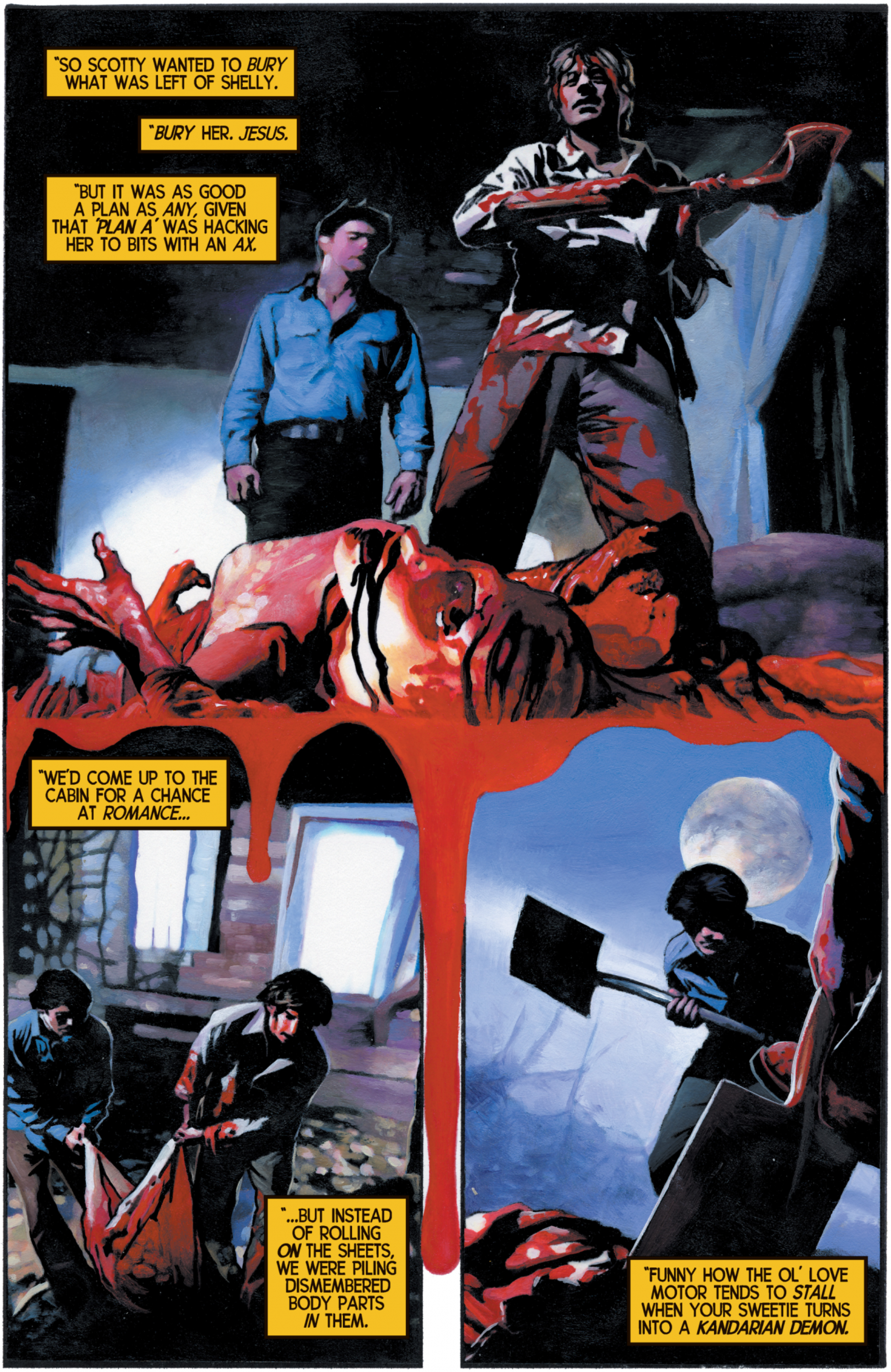

SCOTTY? IS SHE...?
"...AND SHE SURE AS HELL WOULDN'T BE LYING *DEAD* IN SOME GODDAMN REMOTE *CABIN*...
"...OR COMING BACK LIKE SOME SICK *JACK-IN-THE-BOX.*"
REEAAARGHH!!
ASH! THE AXE! KILL IT!!
"HIT SHELLY? WITH AN AXE?
"I WAS THE GUY WHO WORKED A *CASH REGISTER* AT THE LOCAL DEPARTMENT STORE...
"...KILLING WASN'T PART OF THE JOB DESCRIPTION.
"BESIDES, IF THESE REALLY *WERE* DEMONS, WHAT THE HELL COULD *I* DO ABOUT IT?"

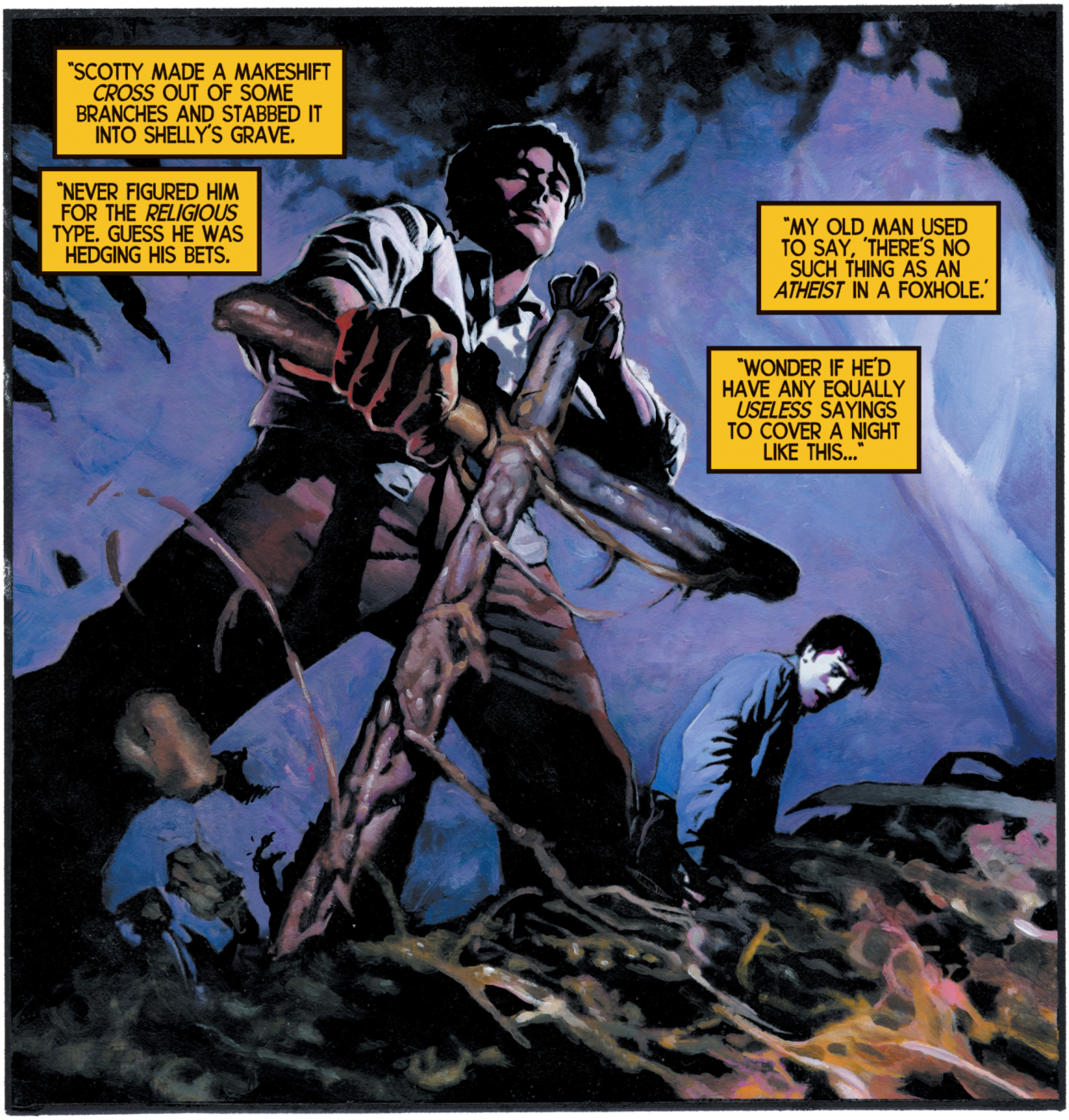

SHHTUNNK
"WELL, THERE WAS THAT."
WHNKK
KNNCH
"AND *THAT*. AND *THAT*."
SCOTT? WHAT'RE WE GONNA *DO?*
WE...WE'RE GONNA *BURY* *HER...*
...OUTSIDE...
HEEE! HEE HEH HEH!

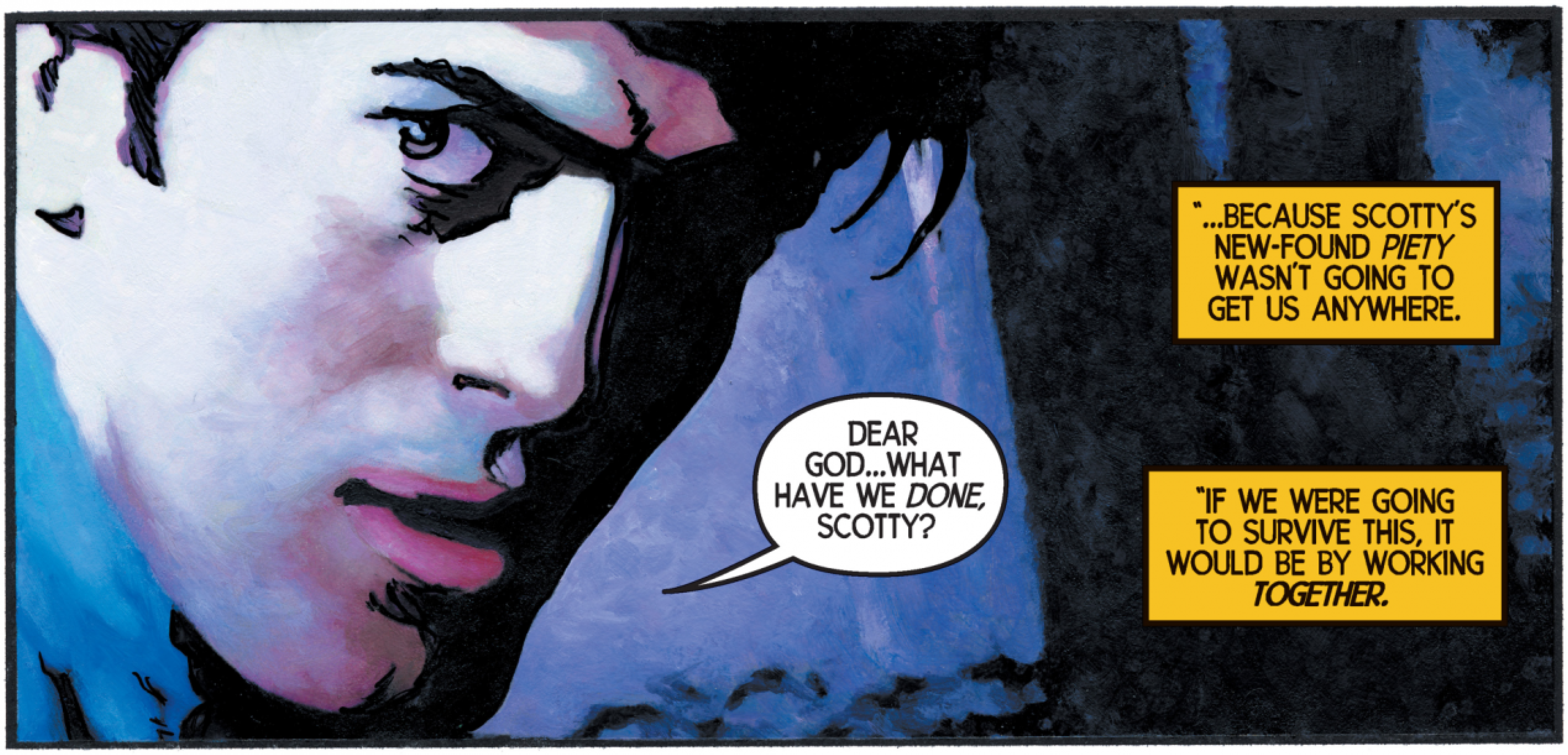
CHAPTER THREE

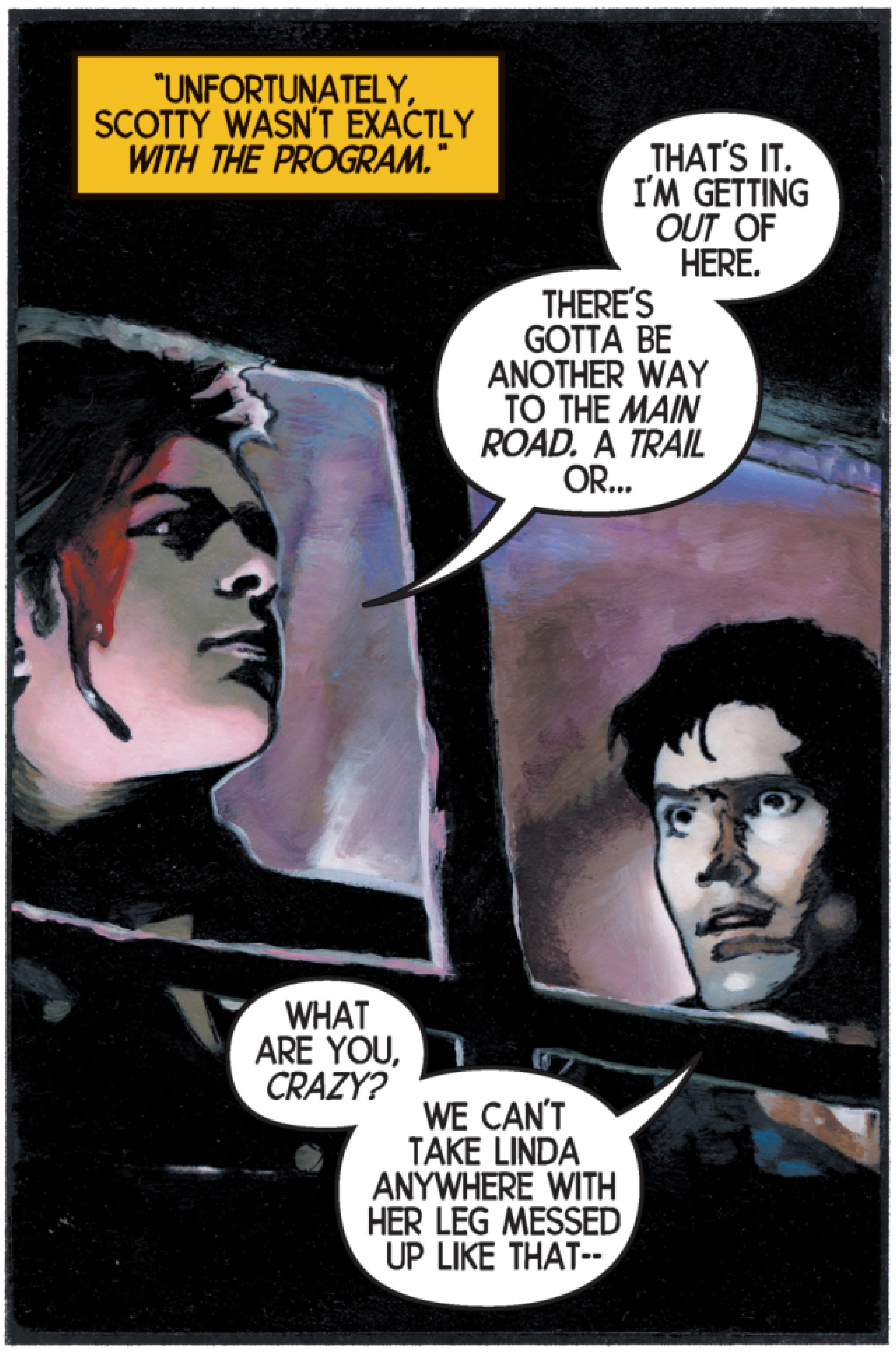


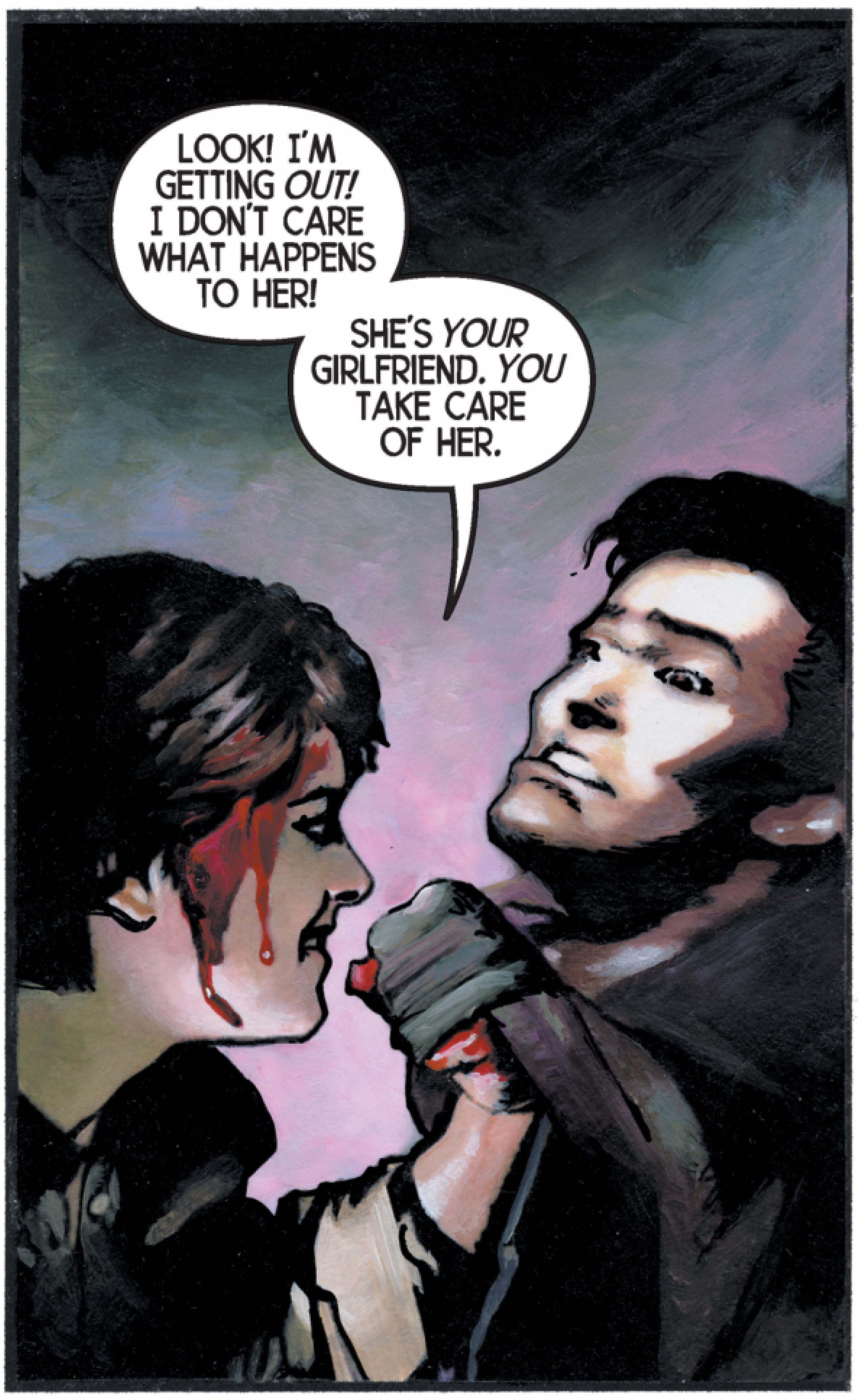
“THE HELLSPAWN WERE
JUST GETTIN’ WARMED UP.”

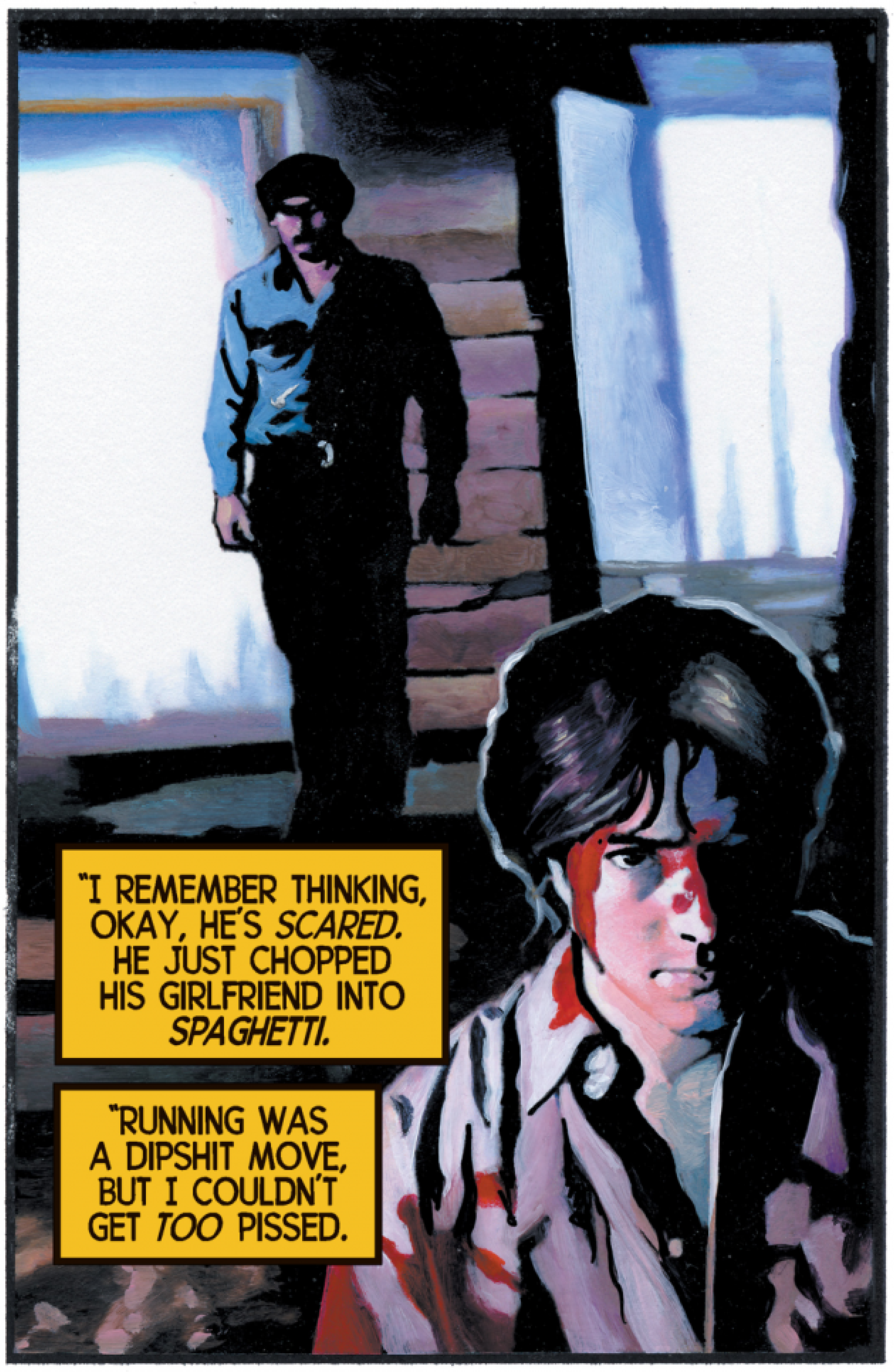

"SO SCOTTY WANTED TO *BURY* WHAT WAS LEFT OF SHELLY.
"*BURY* HER. *JESUS.*
"BUT IT WAS AS GOOD A PLAN AS *ANY,* GIVEN THAT *'PLAN A'* WAS HACKING HER TO BITS WITH AN *AX.*
"WE'D COME UP TO THE CABIN FOR A CHANCE AT *ROMANCE...*
"...BUT INSTEAD OF ROLLING *ON* THE SHEETS, WE WERE PILING DISMEMBERED BODY PARTS *IN* THEM.
"FUNNY HOW THE OL' LOVE MOTOR TENDS TO *STALL* WHEN YOUR SWEETIE TURNS INTO A *KANDARIAN DEMON.*

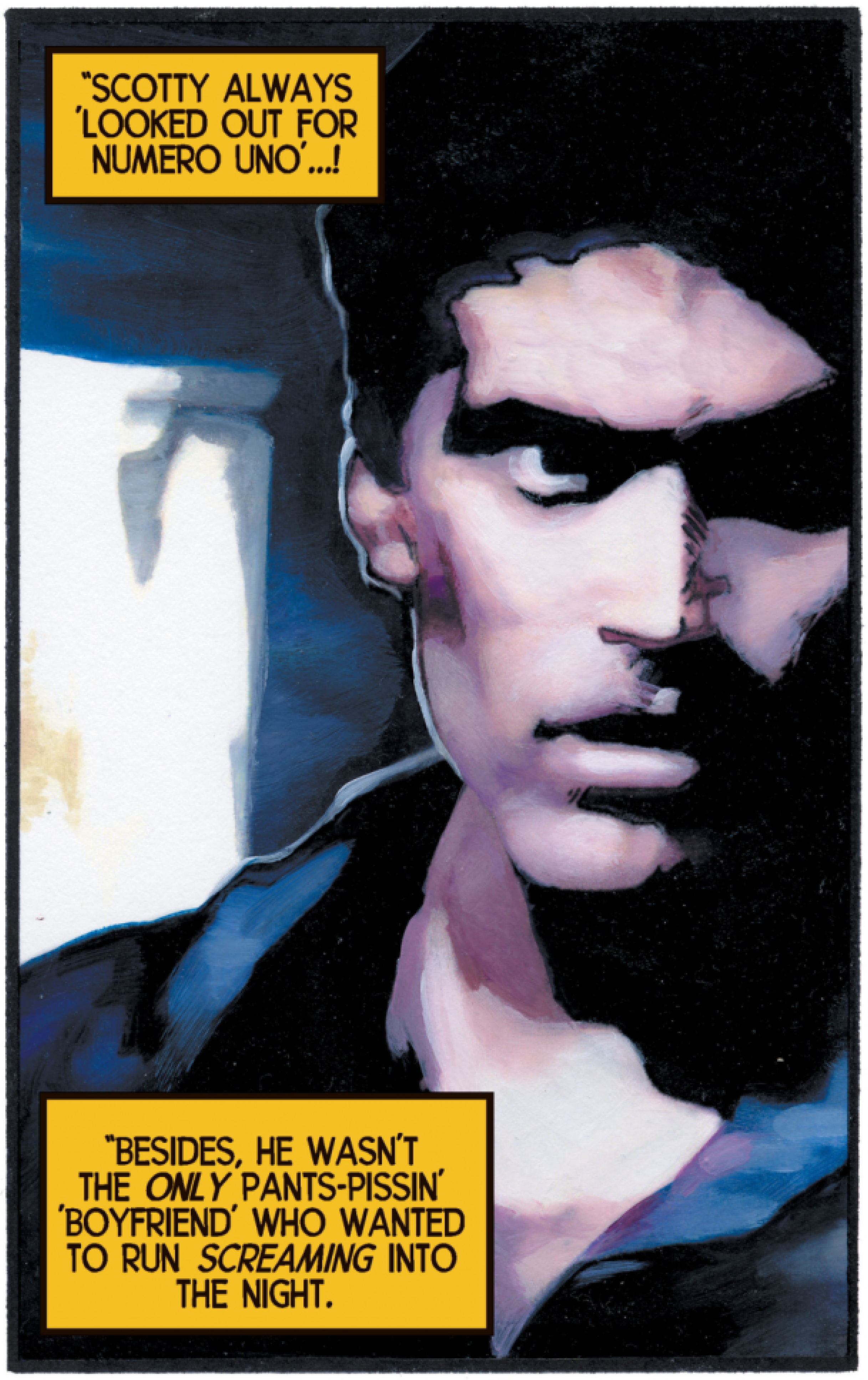

"SCOTTY MADE A MAKESHIFT *CROSS* OUT OF SOME BRANCHES AND STABBED IT INTO SHELLY'S GRAVE.
"NEVER FIGURED HIM FOR THE *RELIGIOUS* TYPE. GUESS HE WAS HEDGING HIS BETS.
"MY OLD MAN USED TO SAY, 'THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS AN *ATHEIST* IN A FOXHOLE.'
"WONDER IF HE'D HAVE ANY EQUALLY *USELESS* SAYINGS TO COVER A NIGHT LIKE THIS..."

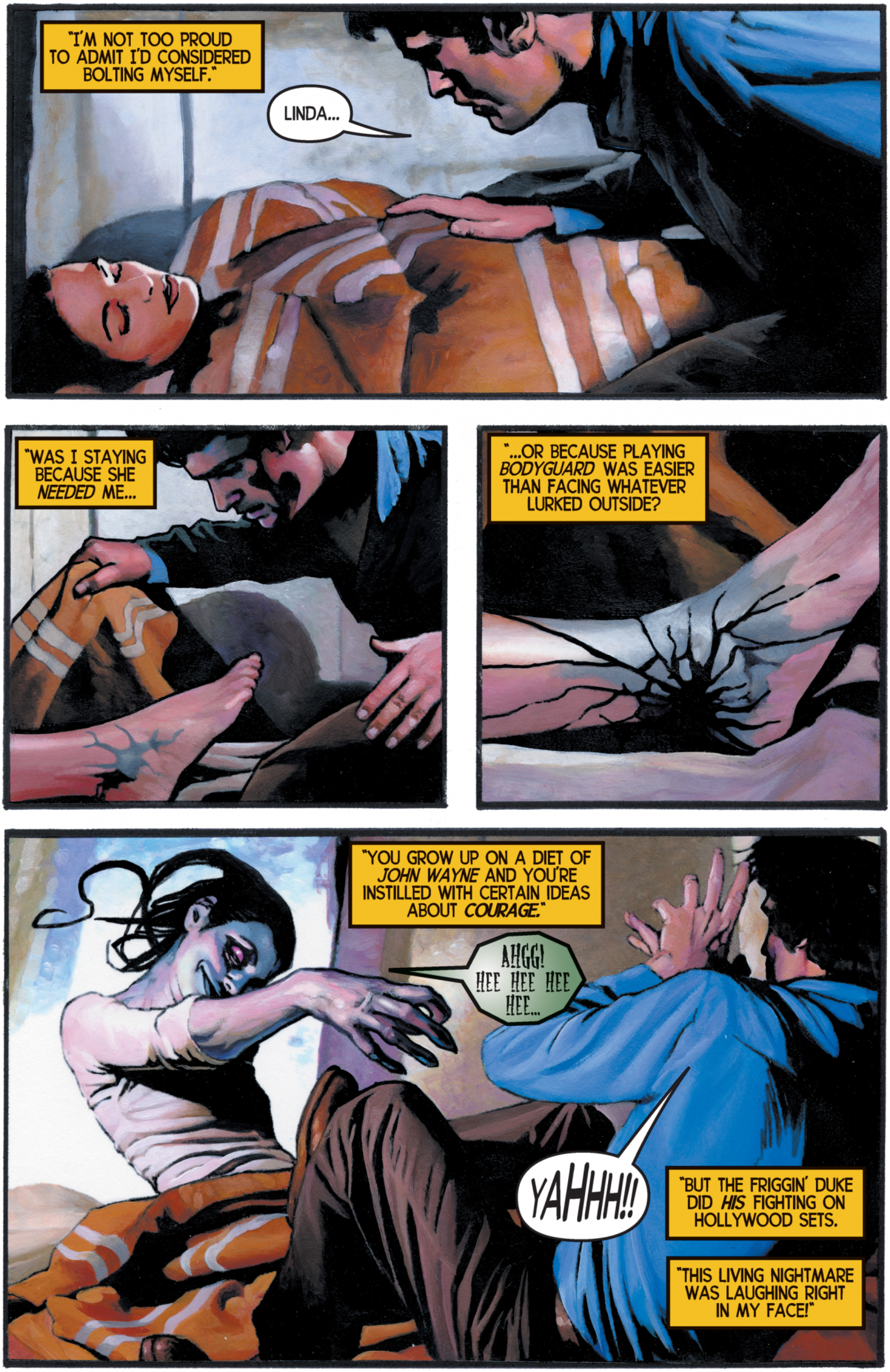

"...BECAUSE SCOTTY'S NEW-FOUND *PIETY* WASN'T GOING TO GET US ANYWHERE.
DEAR GOD...WHAT HAVE WE *DONE,* SCOTTY?
"IF WE WERE GOING TO SURVIVE THIS, IT WOULD BE BY WORKING *TOGETHER.*

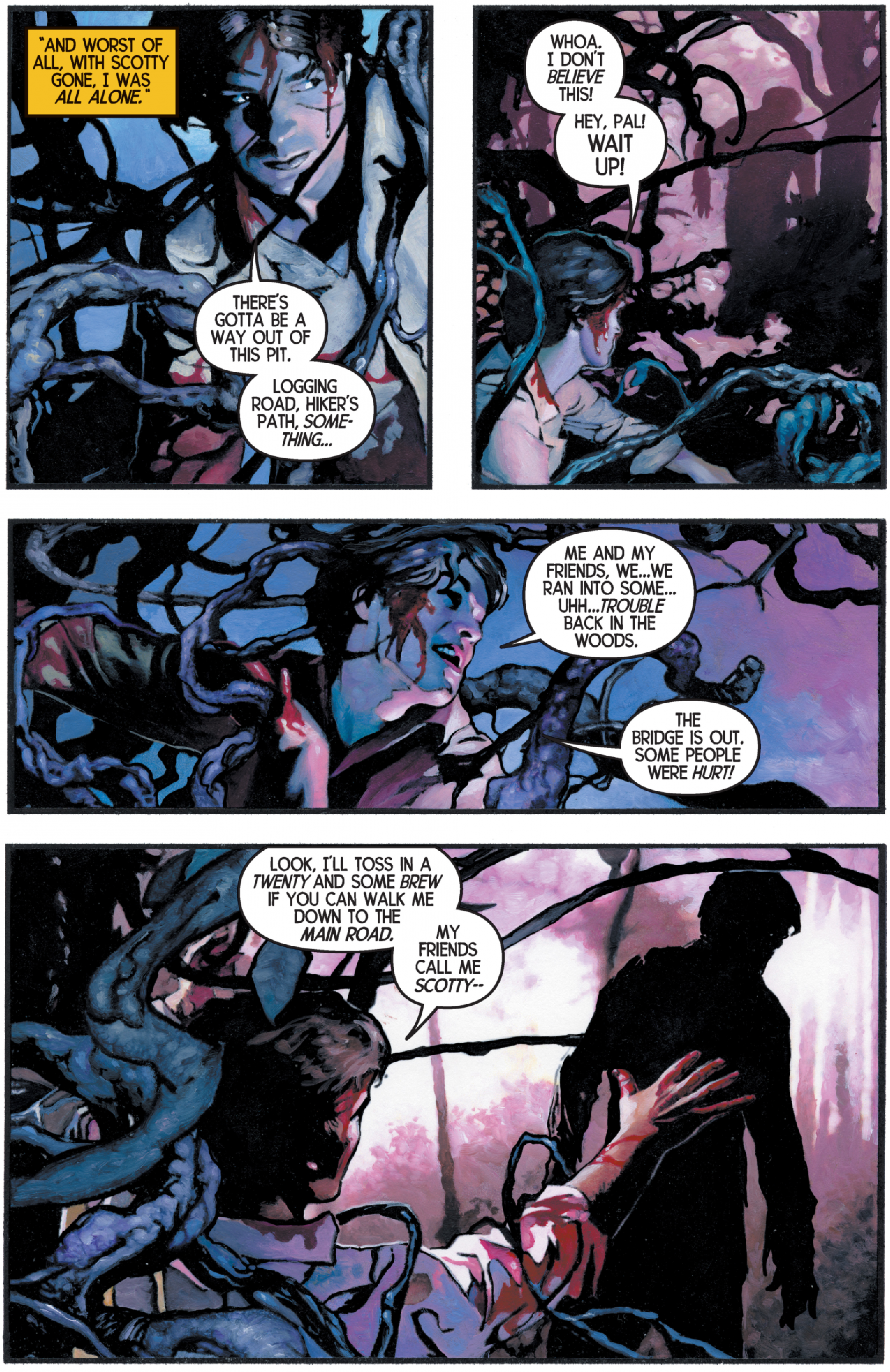

"UNFORTUNATELY, SCOTTY WASN'T EXACTLY *WITH THE PROGRAM.*"
THAT'S IT. I'M GETTING *OUT* OF HERE.
THERE'S GOTTA BE ANOTHER WAY TO THE *MAIN ROAD.* A TRAIL OR...
WHAT ARE YOU, *CRAZY?*
WE CAN'T TAKE LINDA ANYWHERE WITH HER LEG MESSED UP LIKE THAT--

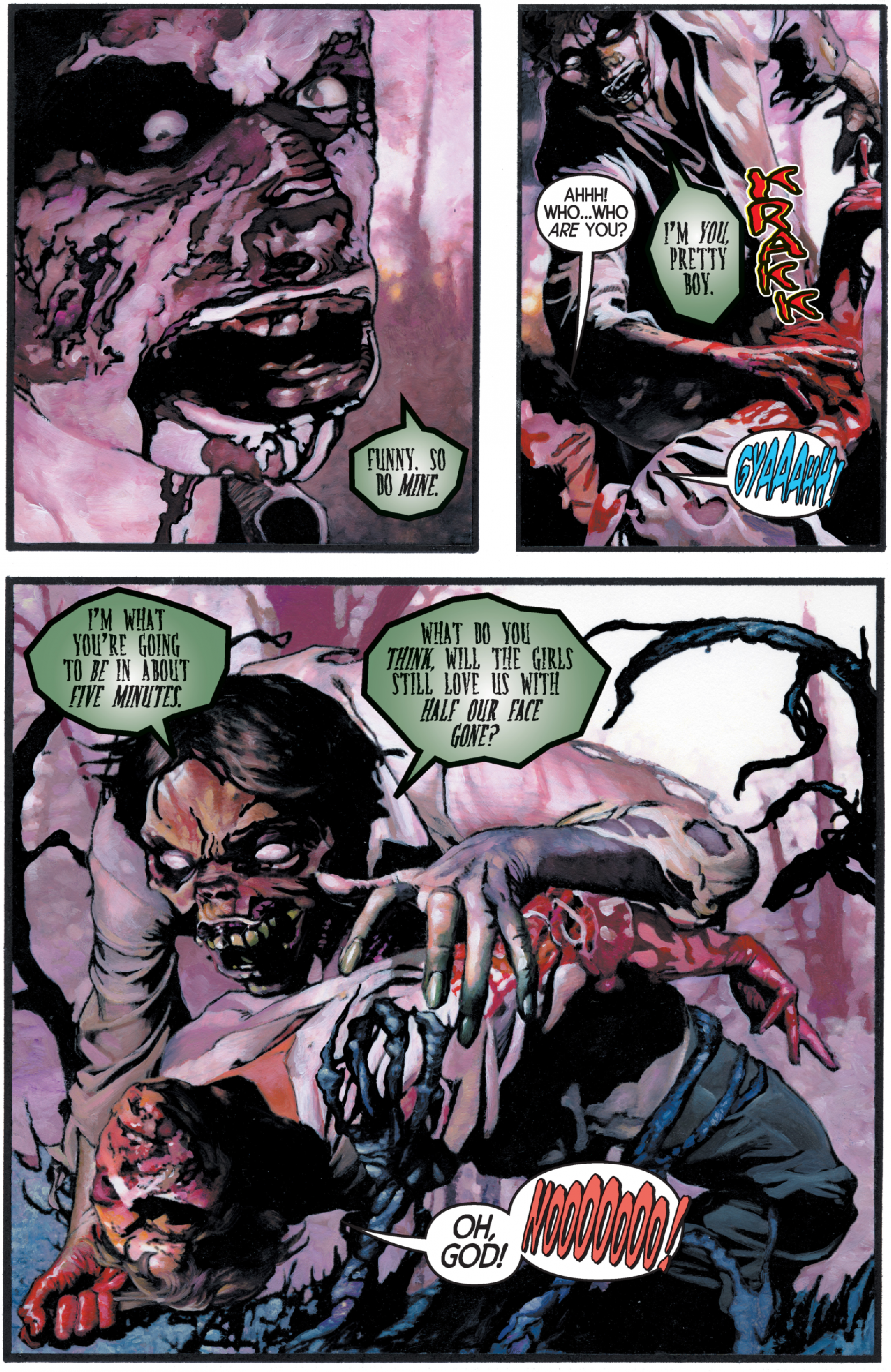

LOOK! I'M GETTING *OUT!* I DON'T CARE WHAT HAPPENS TO HER!
SHE'S *YOUR* GIRLFRIEND. *YOU* TAKE CARE OF HER.

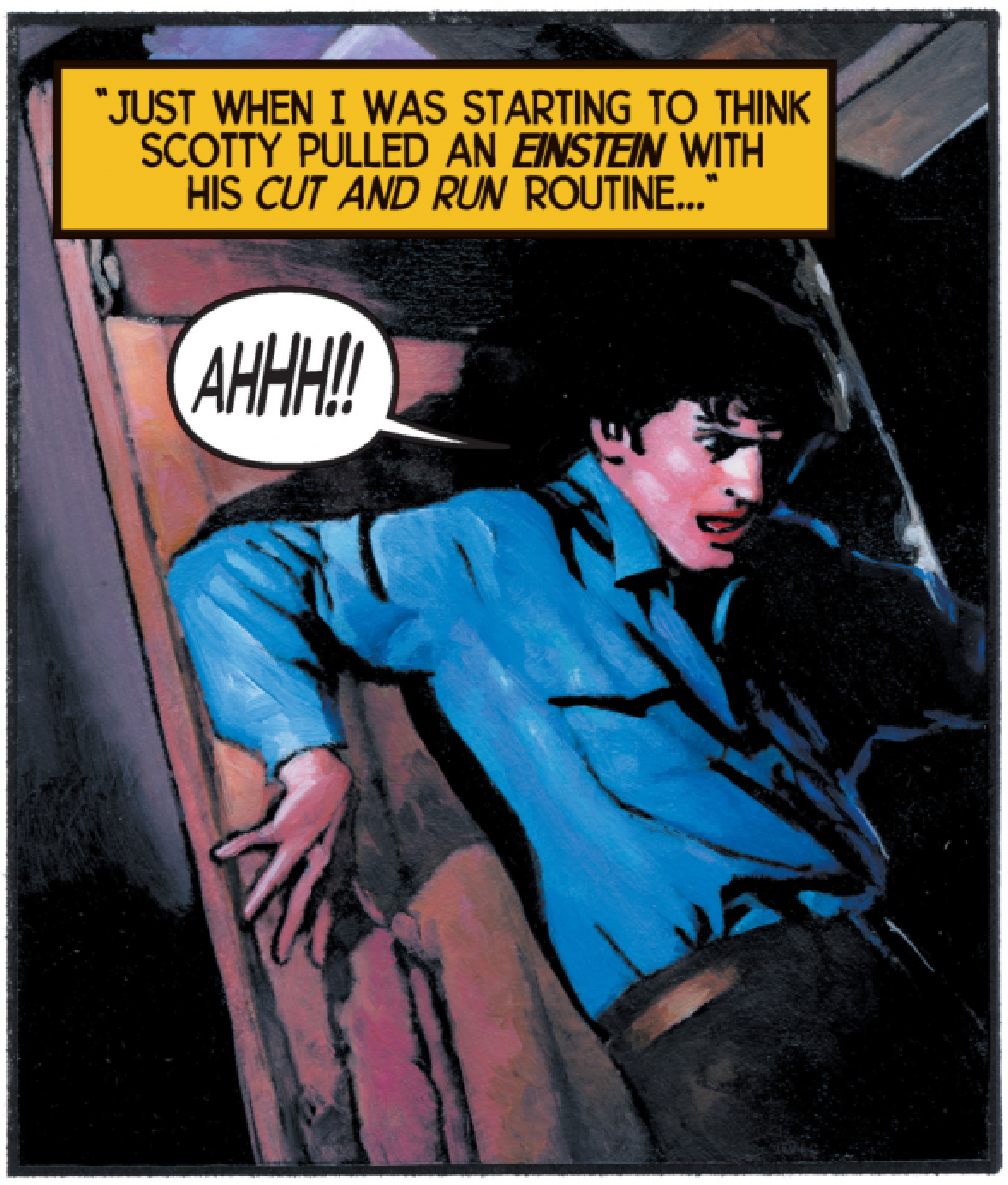

"I REMEMBER THINKING, OKAY, HE'S *SCARED.* HE JUST CHOPPED HIS GIRLFRIEND INTO *SPAGHETTI.*
"RUNNING WAS A DIPSHIT MOVE, BUT I COULDN'T GET *TOO* PISSED.

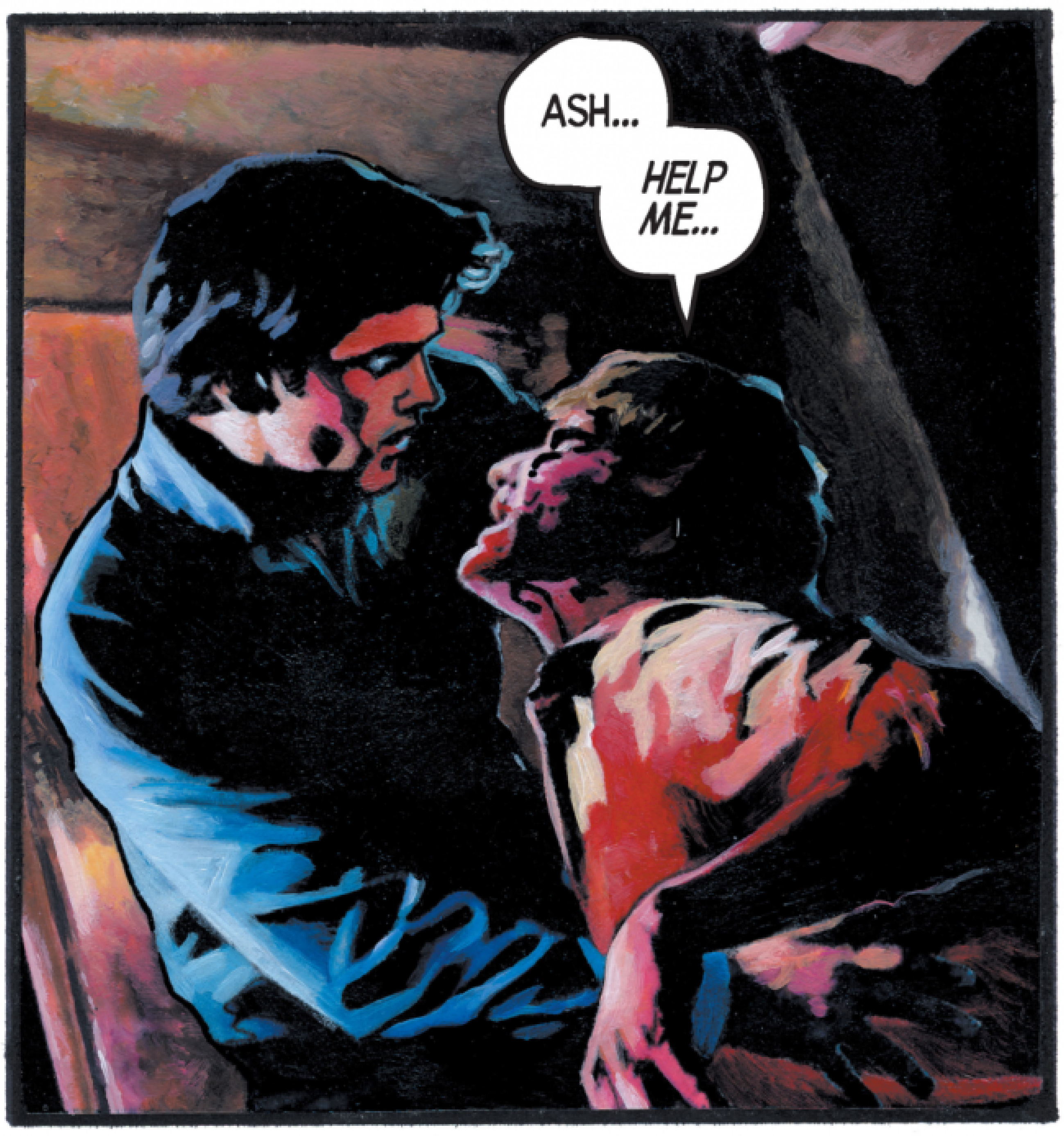

"SCOTTY ALWAYS 'LOOKED OUT FOR NUMERO UNO'...!
"BESIDES, HE WASN'T THE *ONLY* PANTS-PISSIN' 'BOYFRIEND' WHO WANTED TO RUN *SCREAMING* INTO THE NIGHT.

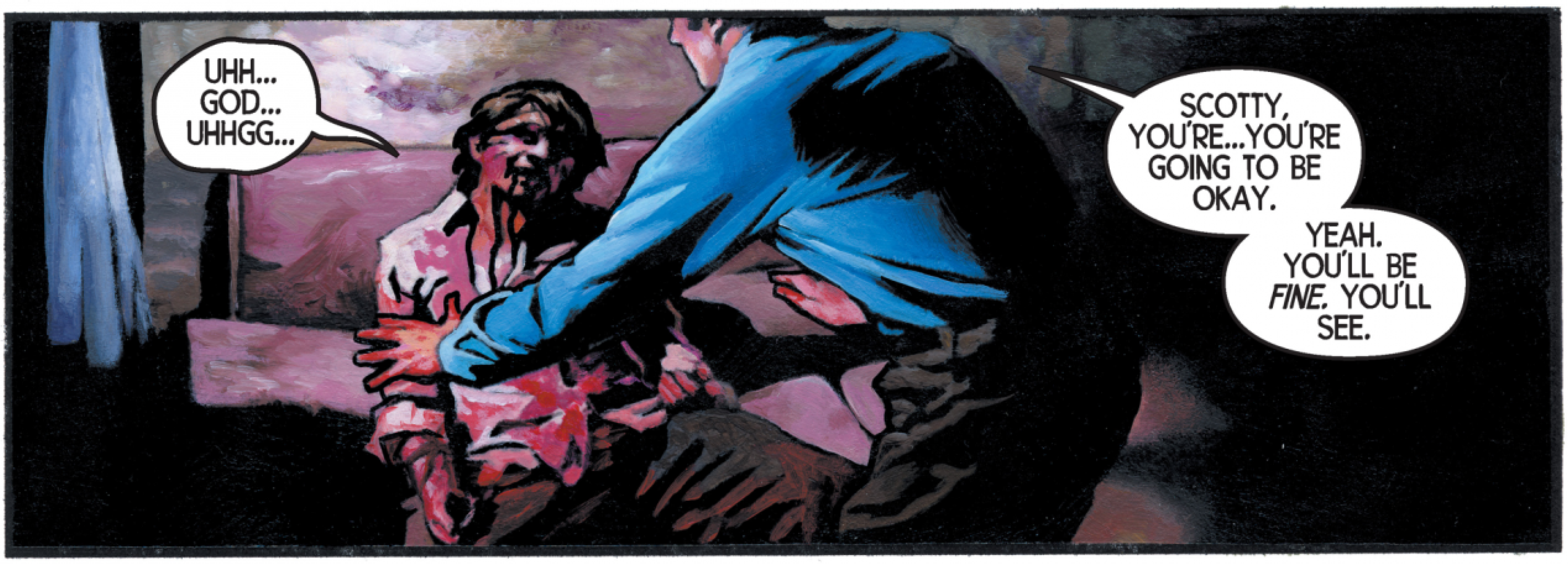

"I'M NOT TOO PROUD TO ADMIT I'D CONSIDERED BOLTING MYSELF."
LINDA...
"WAS I STAYING BECAUSE SHE *NEEDED* ME...
"...OR BECAUSE PLAYING *BODYGUARD* WAS EASIER THAN FACING WHATEVER LURKED OUTSIDE?
"YOU GROW UP ON A DIET OF *JOHN WAYNE* AND YOU'RE INSTILLED WITH CERTAIN IDEAS ABOUT *COURAGE.*"
AHGG! HEE HEE HEE HEE...
YAHHH!!
"BUT THE FRIGGIN' DUKE DID *HIS* FIGHTING ON HOLLYWOOD SETS.
"THIS LIVING NIGHTMARE WAS LAUGHING RIGHT IN MY FACE!"

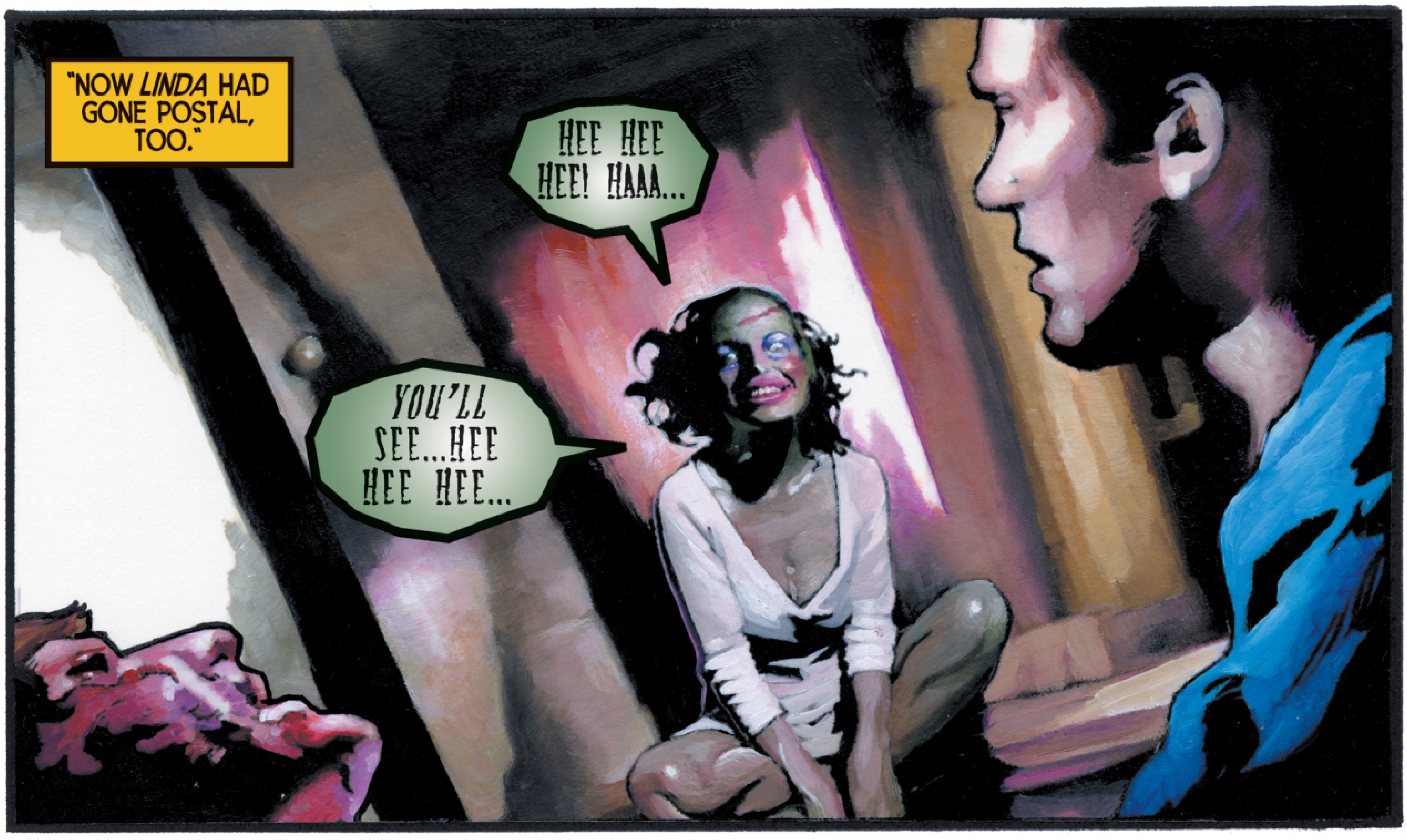

"AND WORST OF ALL, WITH SCOTTY GONE, I WAS *ALL ALONE.*"
THERE'S GOTTA BE A WAY OUT OF THIS PIT.
LOGGING ROAD, HIKER'S PATH, *SOMETHING...*
WHOA. I DON'T *BELIEVE* THIS!
HEY, PAL! **WAIT UP!**
ME AND MY FRIENDS, WE...WE RAN INTO SOME... UHH...*TROUBLE* BACK IN THE WOODS.
THE BRIDGE IS OUT. SOME PEOPLE WERE *HURT!*
LOOK, I'LL TOSS IN A *TWENTY* AND SOME *BREW* IF YOU CAN WALK ME DOWN TO THE *MAIN ROAD.*
MY FRIENDS CALL ME *SCOTTY--*

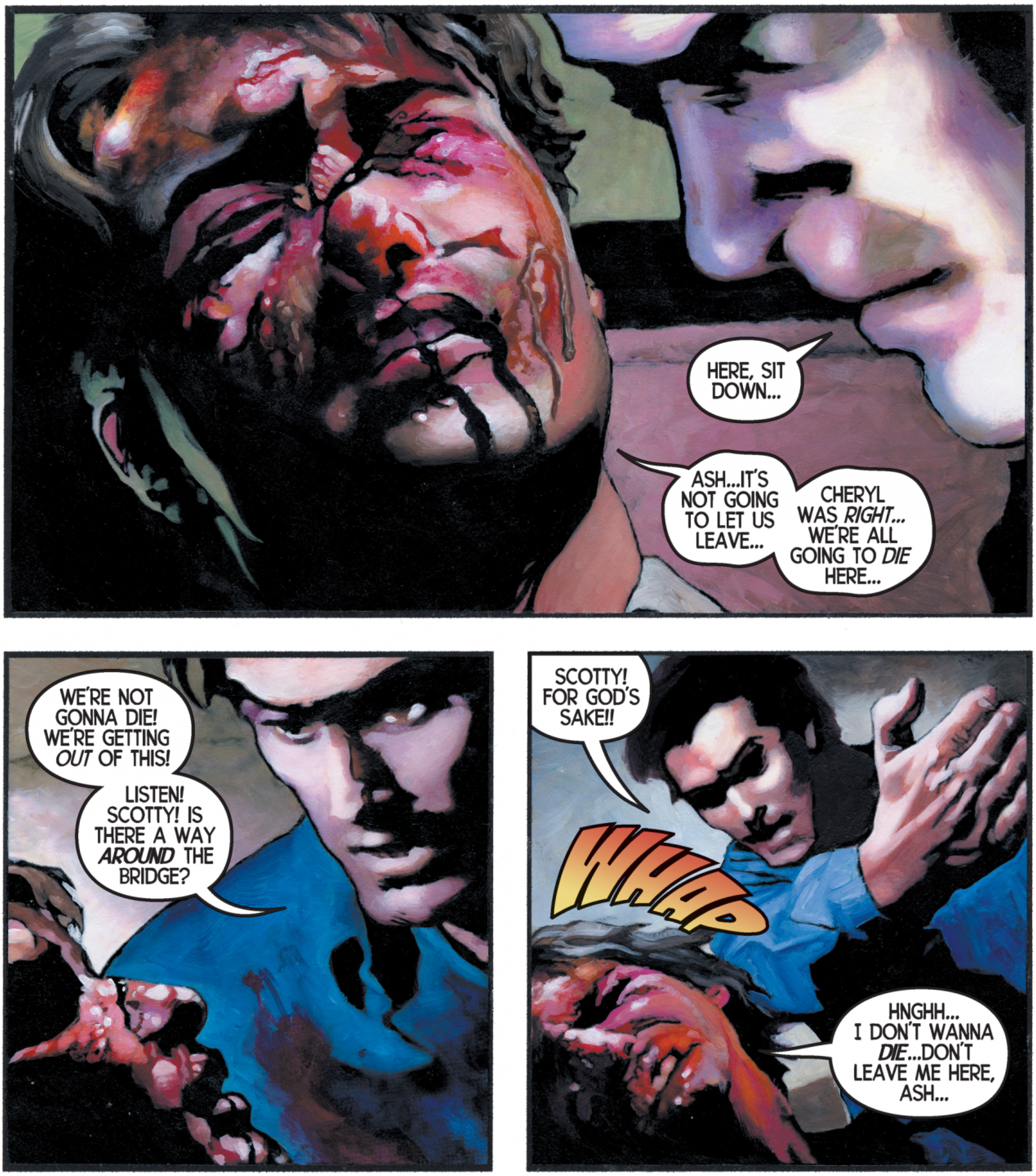

FUNNY. SO DO *MINE*.
AHHH! WHO...WHO *ARE* YOU?
I'M *YOU*, PRETTY BOY.
KRAKK
GYAAAHH!
I'M WHAT YOU'RE GOING TO *BE* IN ABOUT *FIVE MINUTES*.
WHAT DO YOU *THINK*, WILL THE GIRLS STILL LOVE US WITH *HALF OUR FACE GONE?*
OH, GOD!
NOOOOOOO!

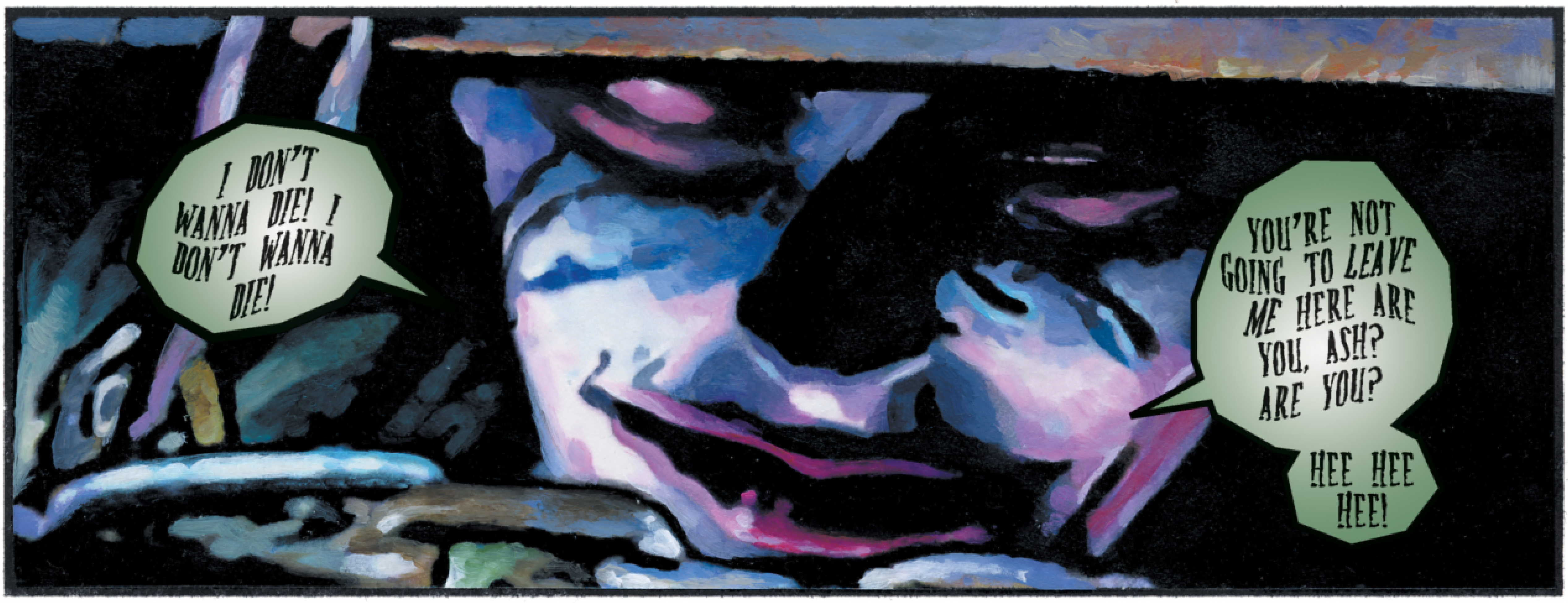

"JUST WHEN I WAS STARTING TO THINK SCOTTY PULLED AN *EINSTEIN* WITH HIS *CUT AND RUN* ROUTINE..."
AHHH!!

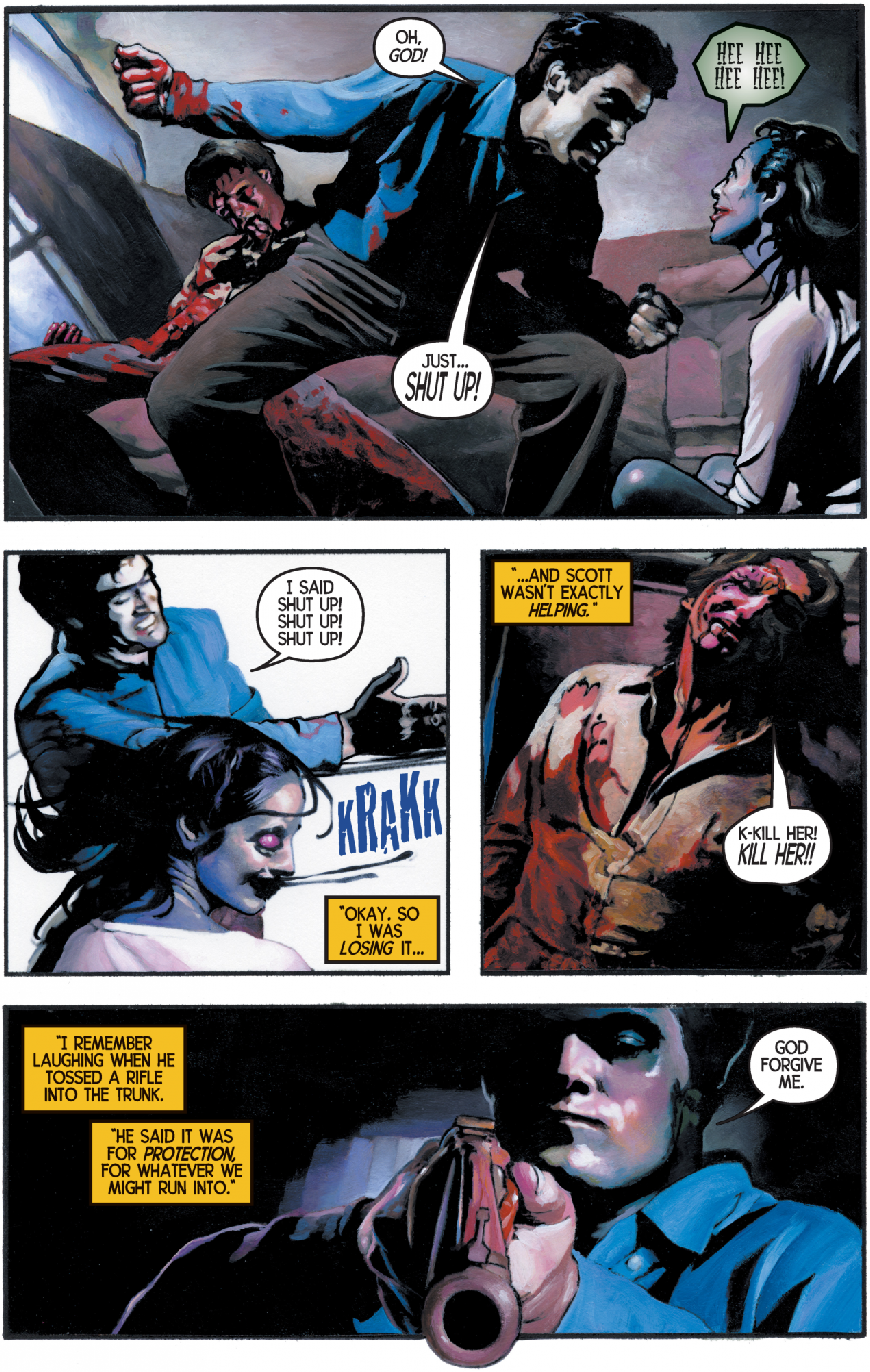

ASH... *HELP ME...*

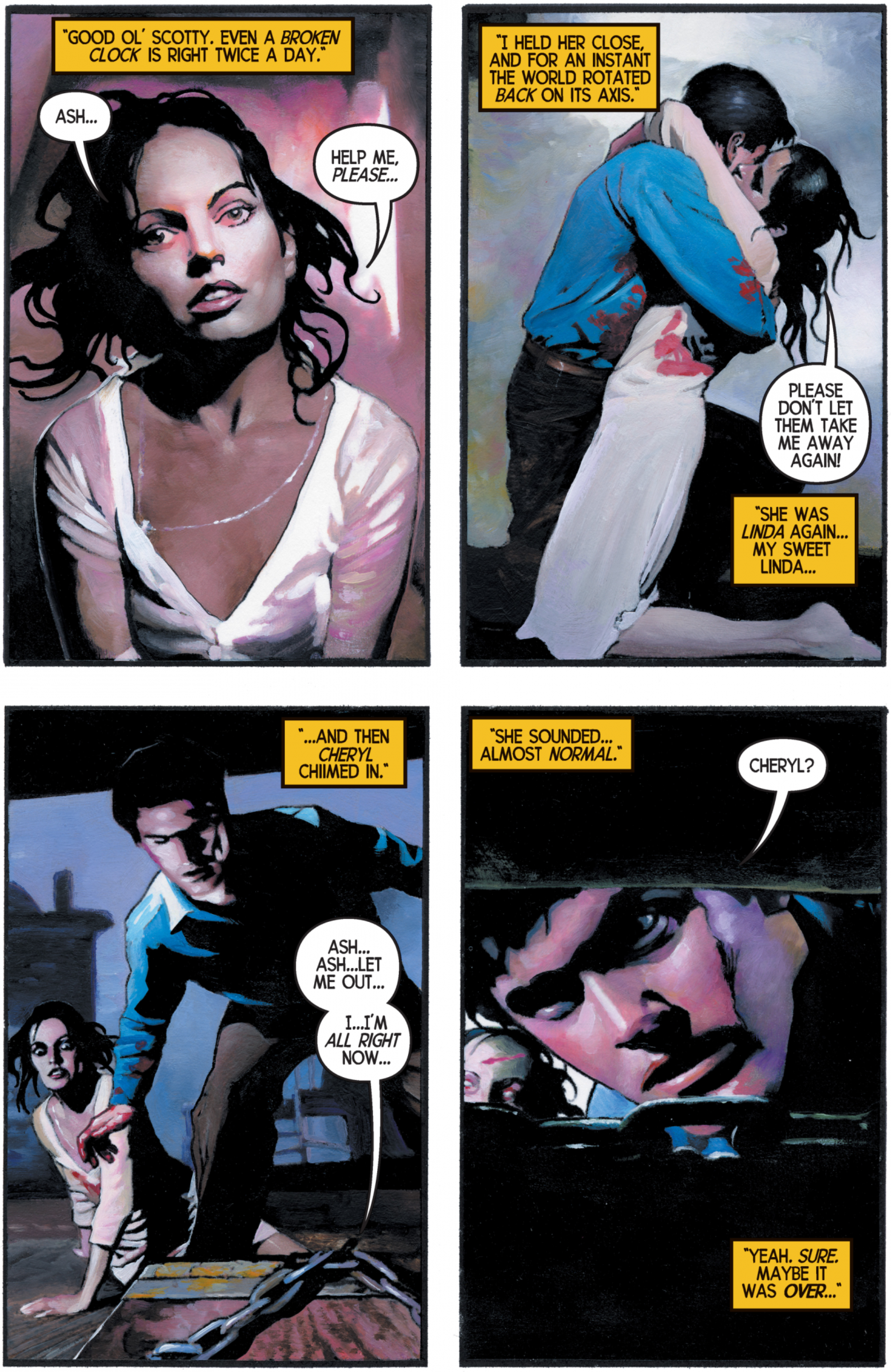

UHH... GOD... UHHGG...
SCOTTY, YOU'RE...YOU'RE GOING TO BE OKAY.
YEAH. YOU'LL BE *FINE.* YOU'LL SEE.

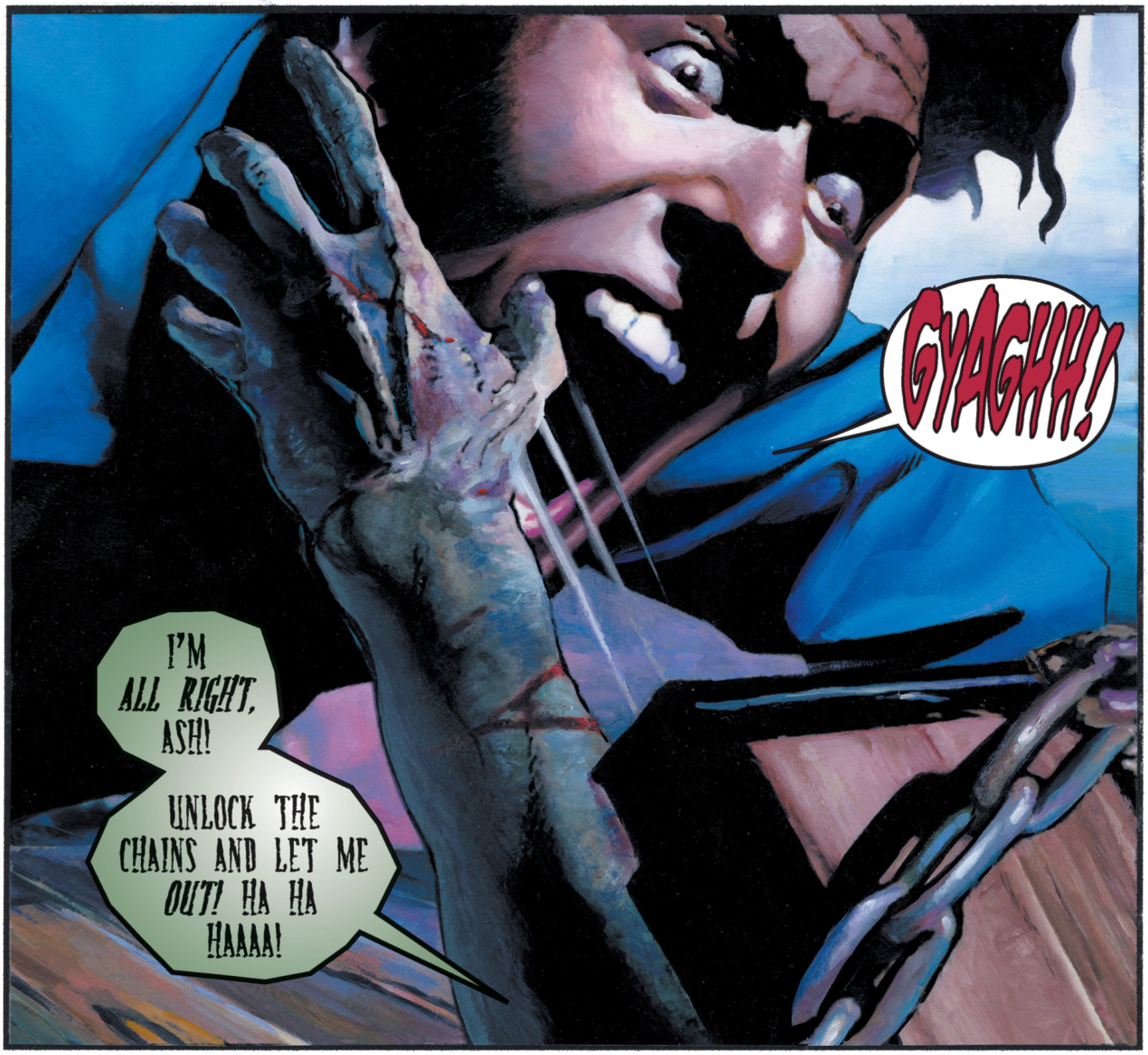

"NOW *LINDA* HAD GONE POSTAL, TOO."
HEE HEE HEE! HAAA...
YOU'LL SEE...HEE HEE HEE...

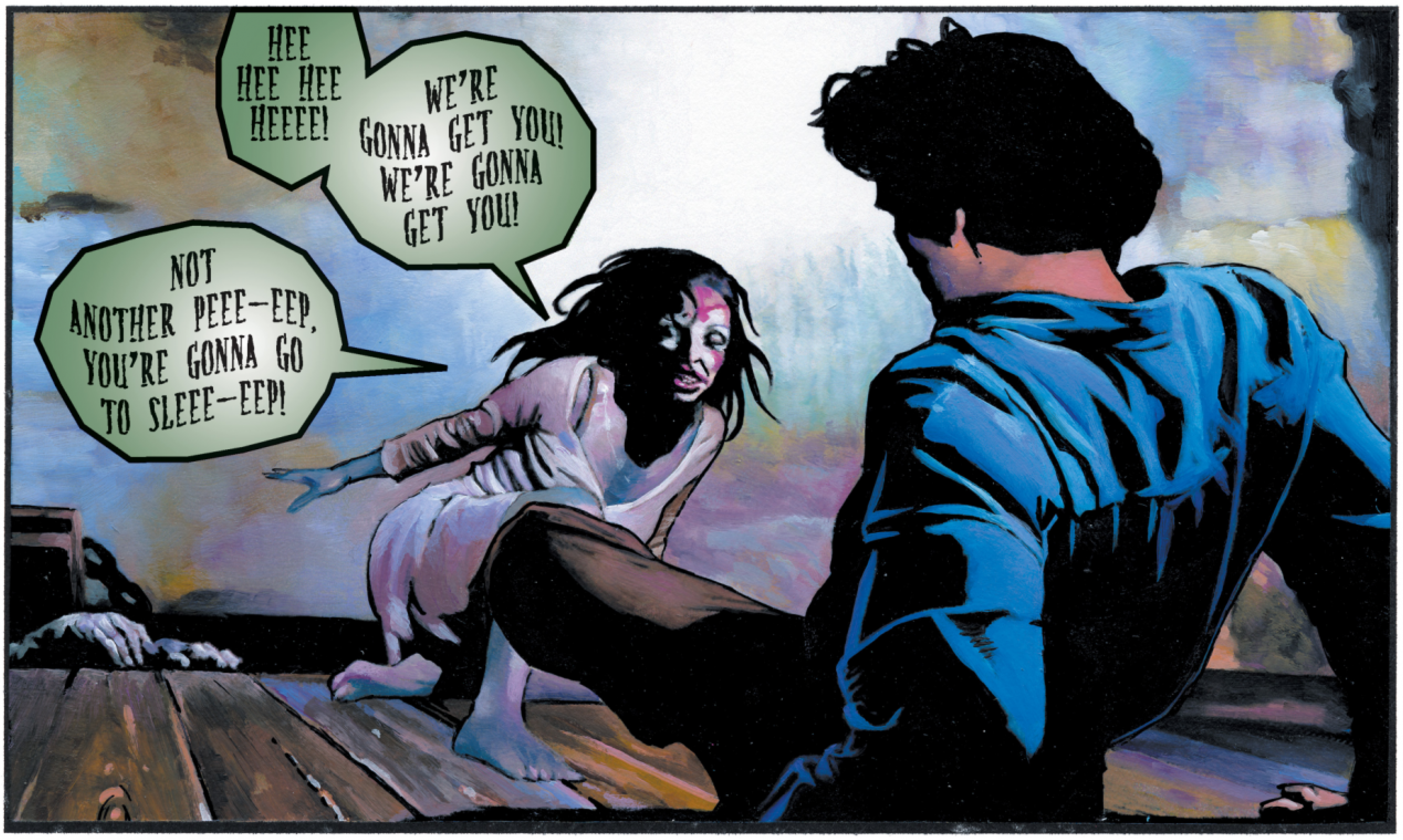

HERE, SIT DOWN...
ASH...IT'S NOT GOING TO LET US LEAVE...
CHERYL WAS *RIGHT*... WE'RE ALL GOING TO *DIE* HERE...
WE'RE NOT GONNA DIE! WE'RE GETTING *OUT* OF THIS!
LISTEN! SCOTTY! IS THERE A WAY *AROUND* THE BRIDGE?
SCOTTY! FOR GOD'S SAKE!!
WHAP
HNGHH... I DON'T WANNA *DIE*...DON'T LEAVE ME HERE, ASH...

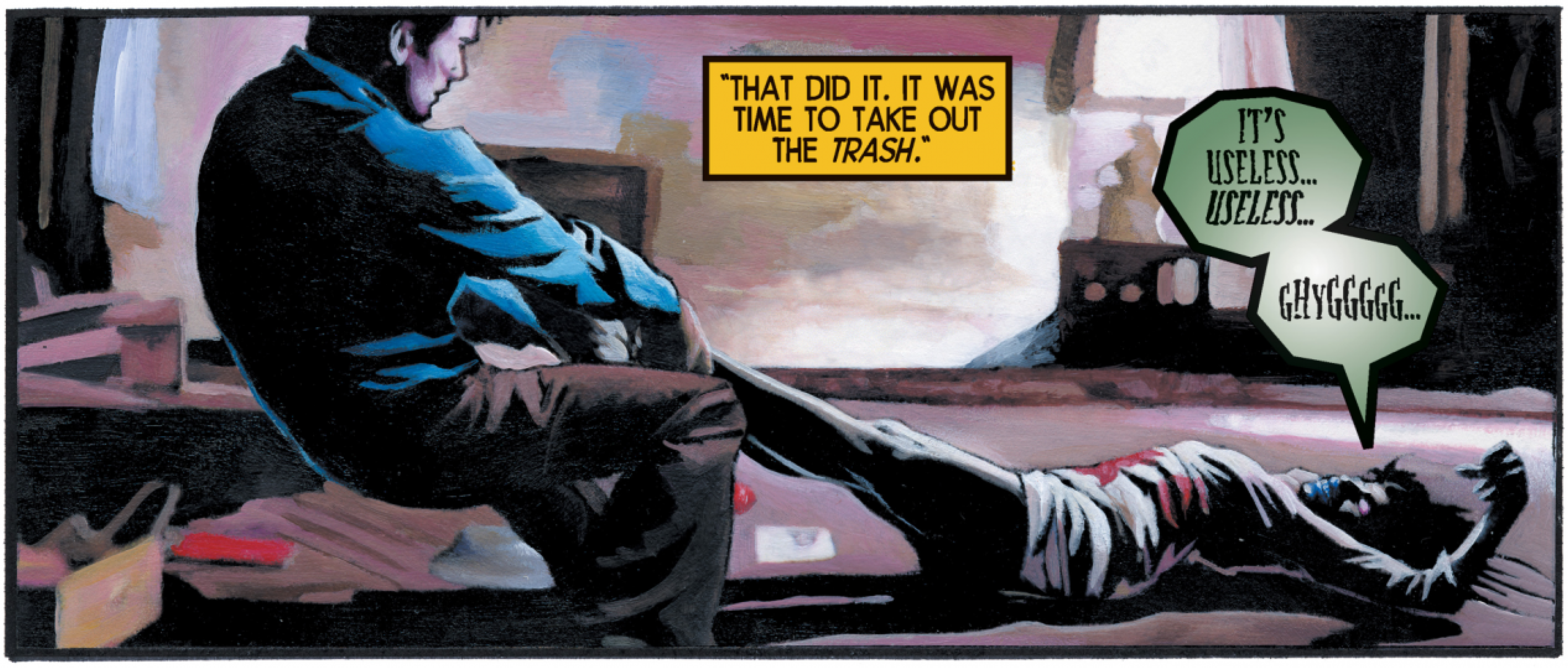

I DON'T WANNA DIE! I DON'T WANNA DIE!
YOU'RE NOT GOING TO *LEAVE* *ME* HERE ARE YOU, ASH? ARE YOU?
HEE HEE HEE!

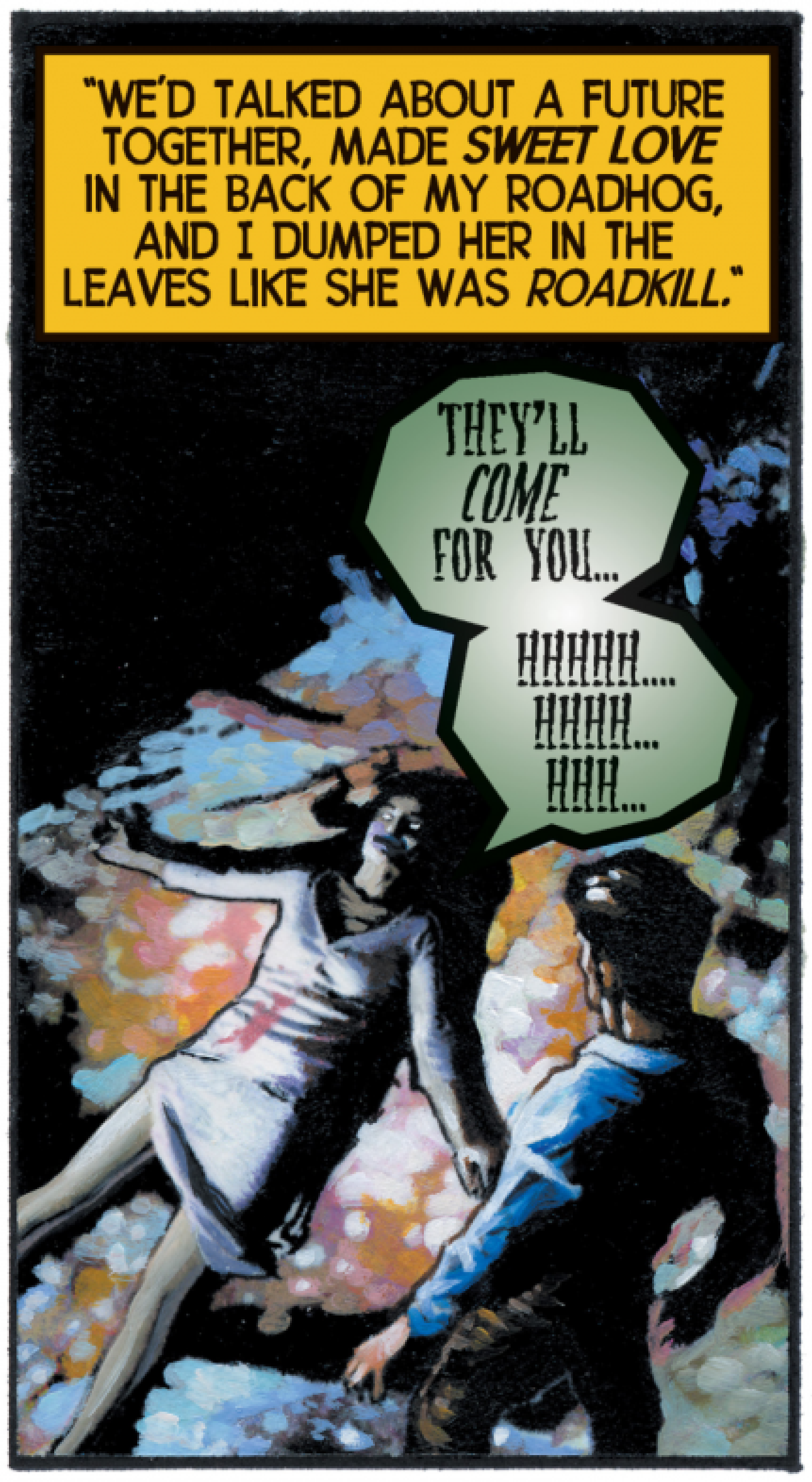

OH, *GOD!*
HEE HEE HEE HEE!
JUST... SHUT UP!
I SAID SHUT UP! SHUT UP! SHUT UP!
KRAKK
"OKAY. SO I WAS *LOSING* IT...
"...AND SCOTT WASN'T EXACTLY *HELPING.*"
K-KILL HER! *KILL HER!!*
"I REMEMBER LAUGHING WHEN HE TOSSED A RIFLE INTO THE TRUNK.
"HE SAID IT WAS FOR *PROTECTION,* FOR WHATEVER WE MIGHT RUN INTO."
GOD FORGIVE ME.

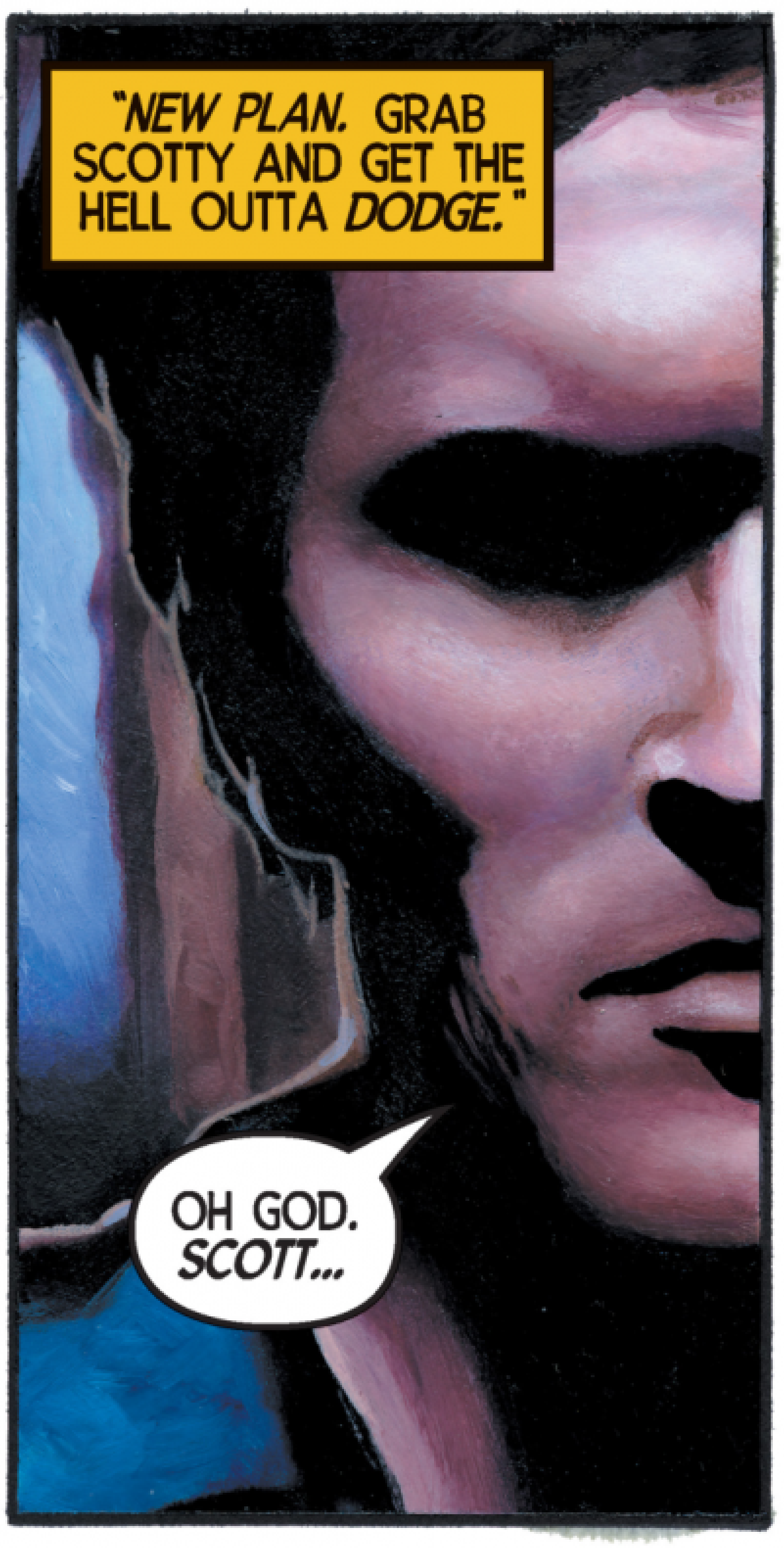

"GOOD OL' SCOTTY. EVEN A *BROKEN CLOCK* IS RIGHT TWICE A DAY."
ASH...
HELP ME, *PLEASE...*
"I HELD HER CLOSE, AND FOR AN INSTANT THE WORLD ROTATED *BACK* ON ITS AXIS."
PLEASE DON'T LET THEM TAKE ME AWAY AGAIN!
"SHE WAS *LINDA* AGAIN... MY SWEET LINDA...
"...AND THEN *CHERYL* CHIIMED IN."
ASH... ASH...LET ME OUT...
I...I'M *ALL RIGHT* NOW...
"SHE SOUNDED... ALMOST *NORMAL*."
CHERYL?
"YEAH. *SURE.* MAYBE IT WAS *OVER*..."

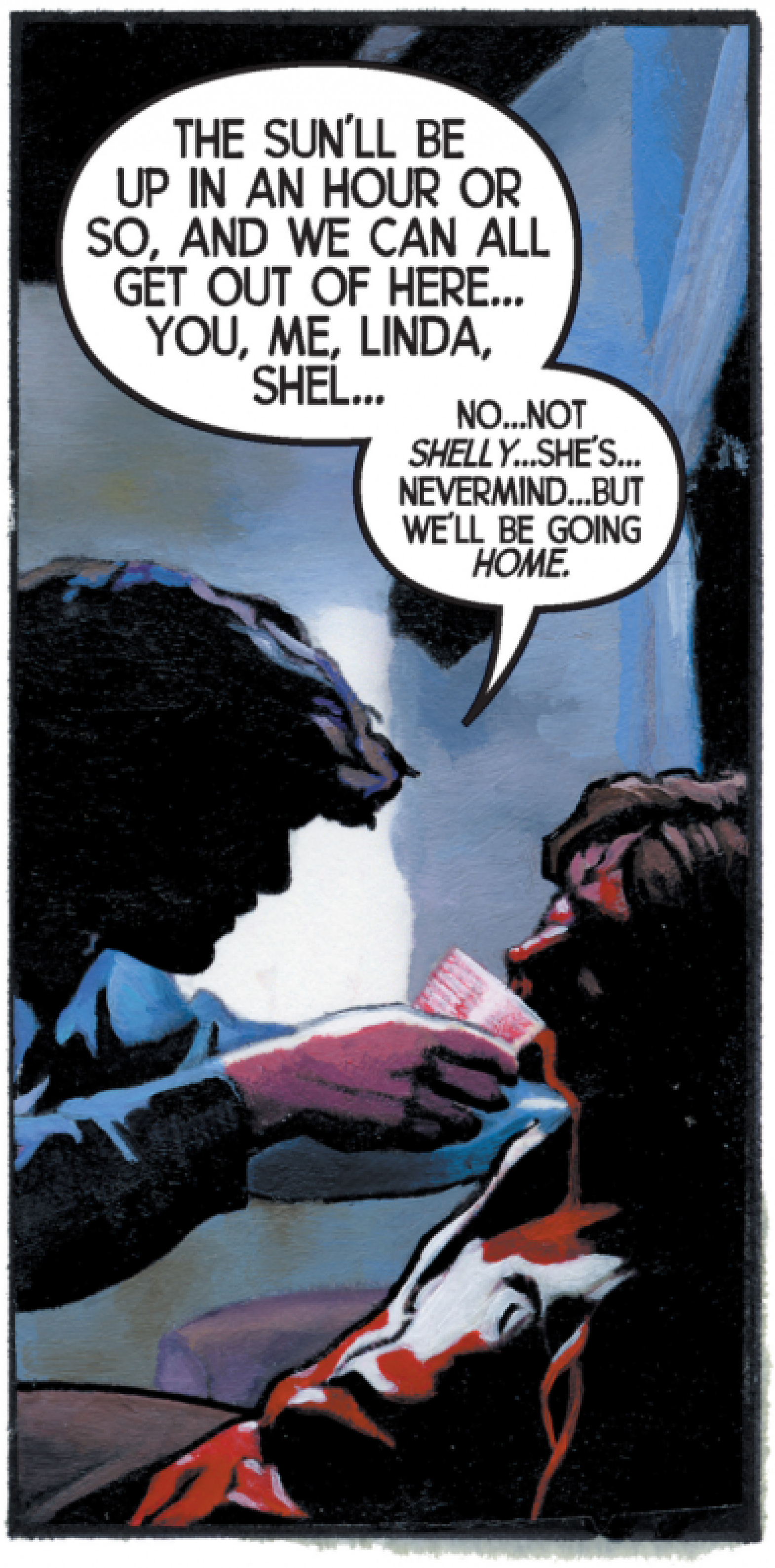

GYAGHH!
I'M ALL RIGHT, ASH!
UNLOCK THE CHAINS AND LET ME OUT! HA HA HAAAA!

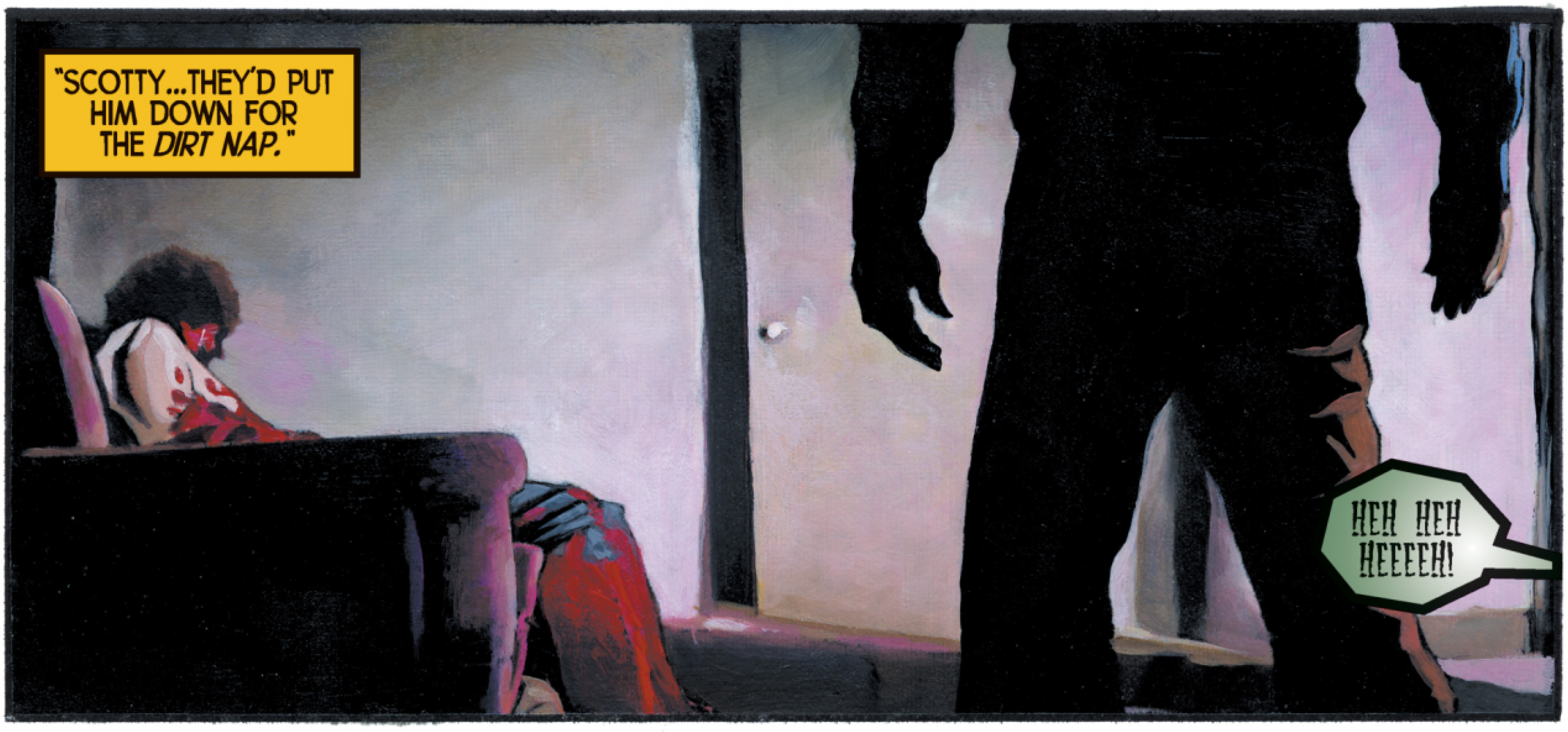

HEE HEE HEE HEEEE!
WE'RE GONNA GET YOU! WE'RE GONNA GET YOU!
NOT ANOTHER PEEE-EEP, YOU'RE GONNA GO TO SLEEE-EEP!

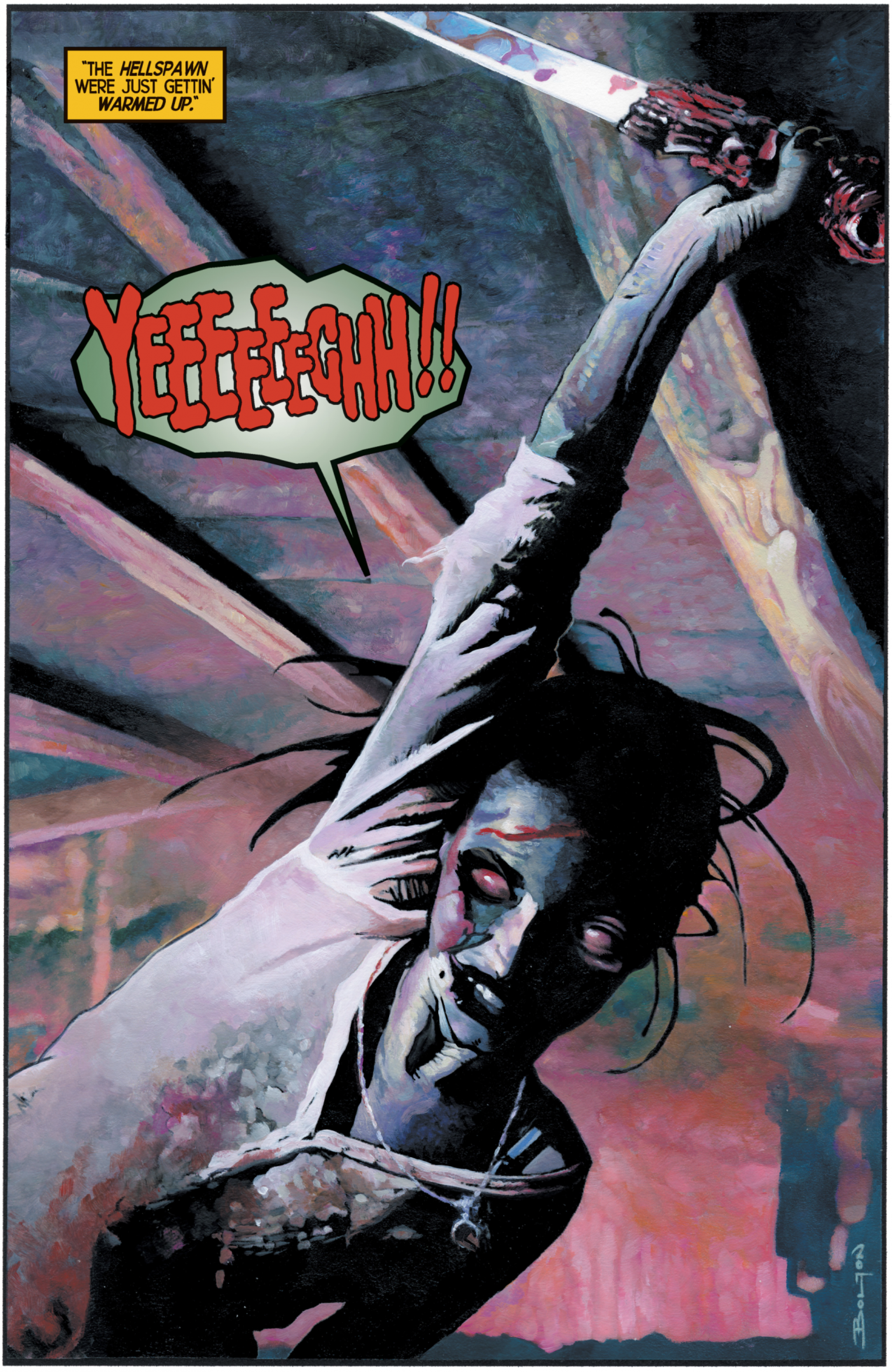

"THAT DID IT. IT WAS TIME TO TAKE OUT THE *TRASH.*"
IT'S USELESS... *USELESS...*
GHYGGGGG...

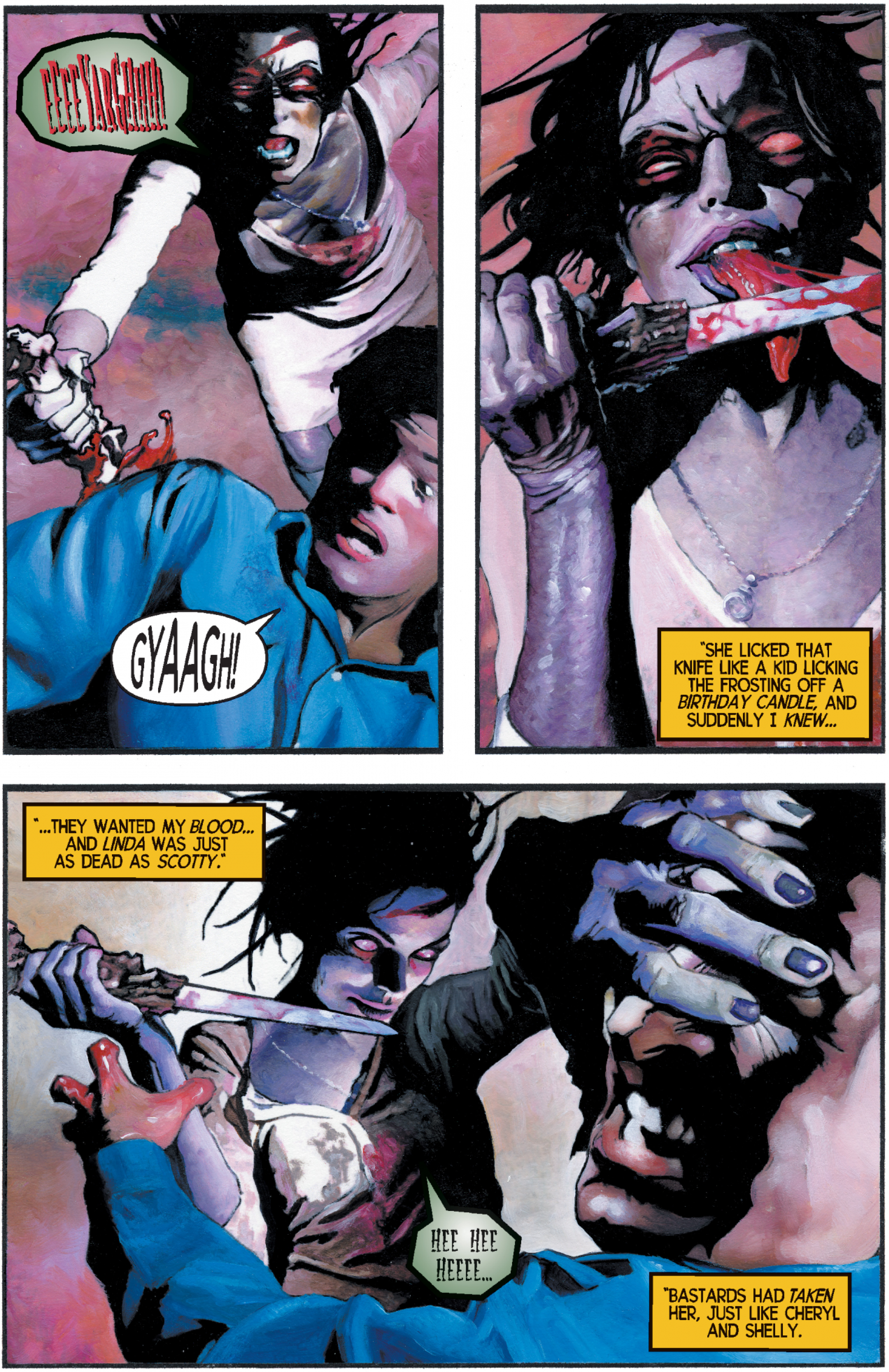

"WE'D TALKED ABOUT A FUTURE TOGETHER, MADE *SWEET LOVE* IN THE BACK OF MY ROADHOG, AND I DUMPED HER IN THE LEAVES LIKE SHE WAS *ROADKILL.*"
THEY'LL *COME* FOR YOU...
HHHHH.... HHHH... HHH...

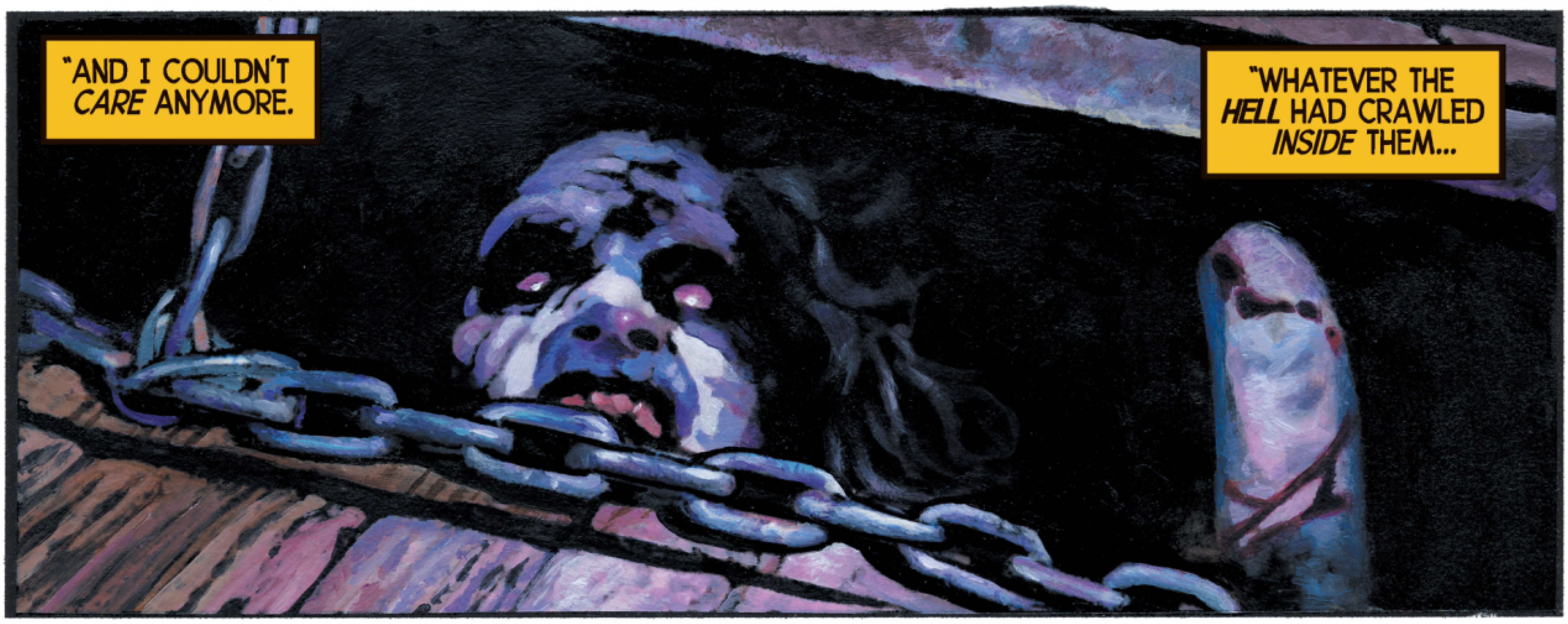

"*NEW PLAN.* GRAB SCOTTY AND GET THE HELL OUTTA *DODGE.*"
OH GOD. *SCOTT...*

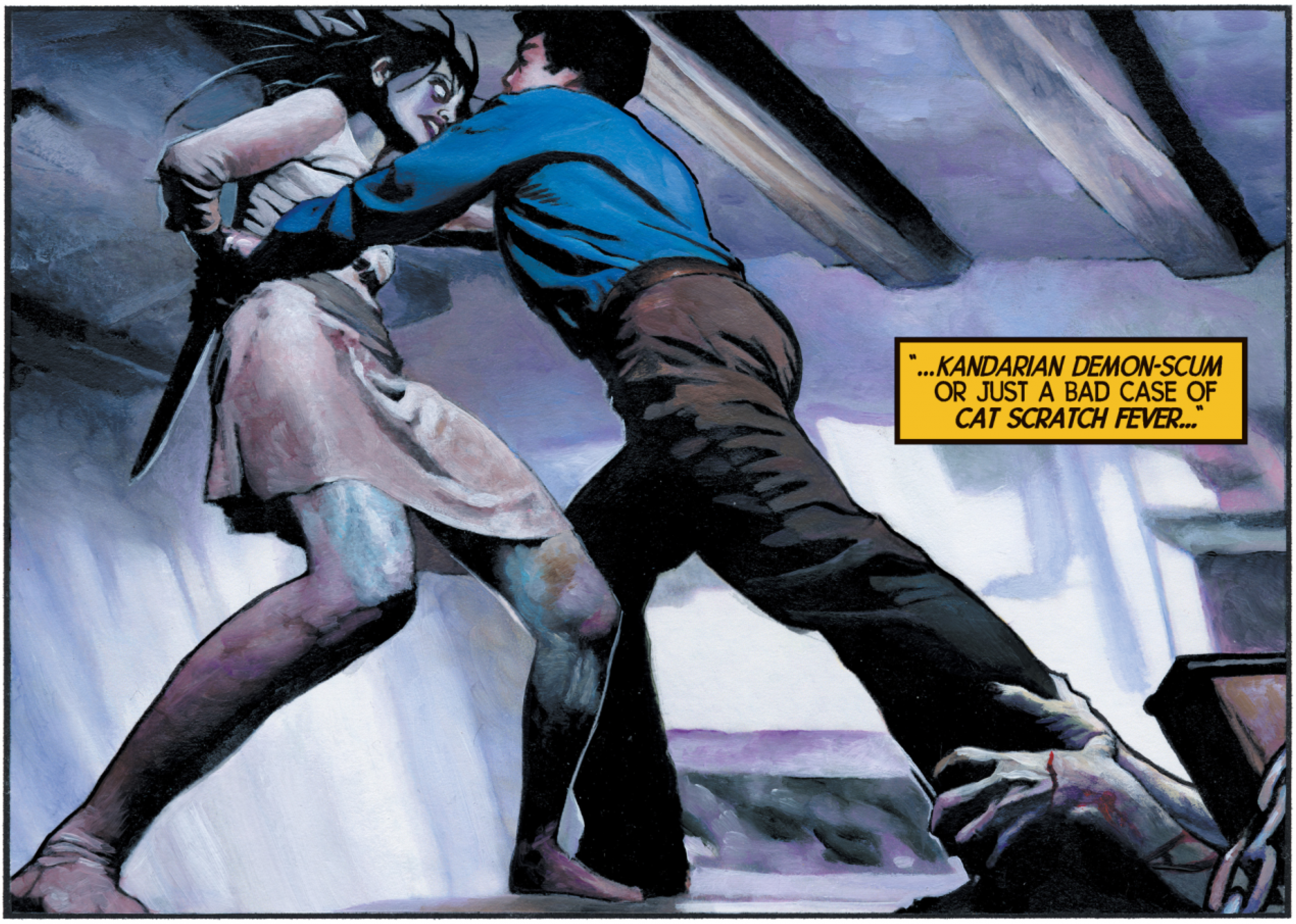

THE SUN'LL BE UP IN AN HOUR OR SO, AND WE CAN ALL GET OUT OF HERE... YOU, ME, LINDA, SHEL...
NO...NOT *SHELLY*...SHE'S... NEVERMIND...BUT WE'LL BE GOING *HOME.*

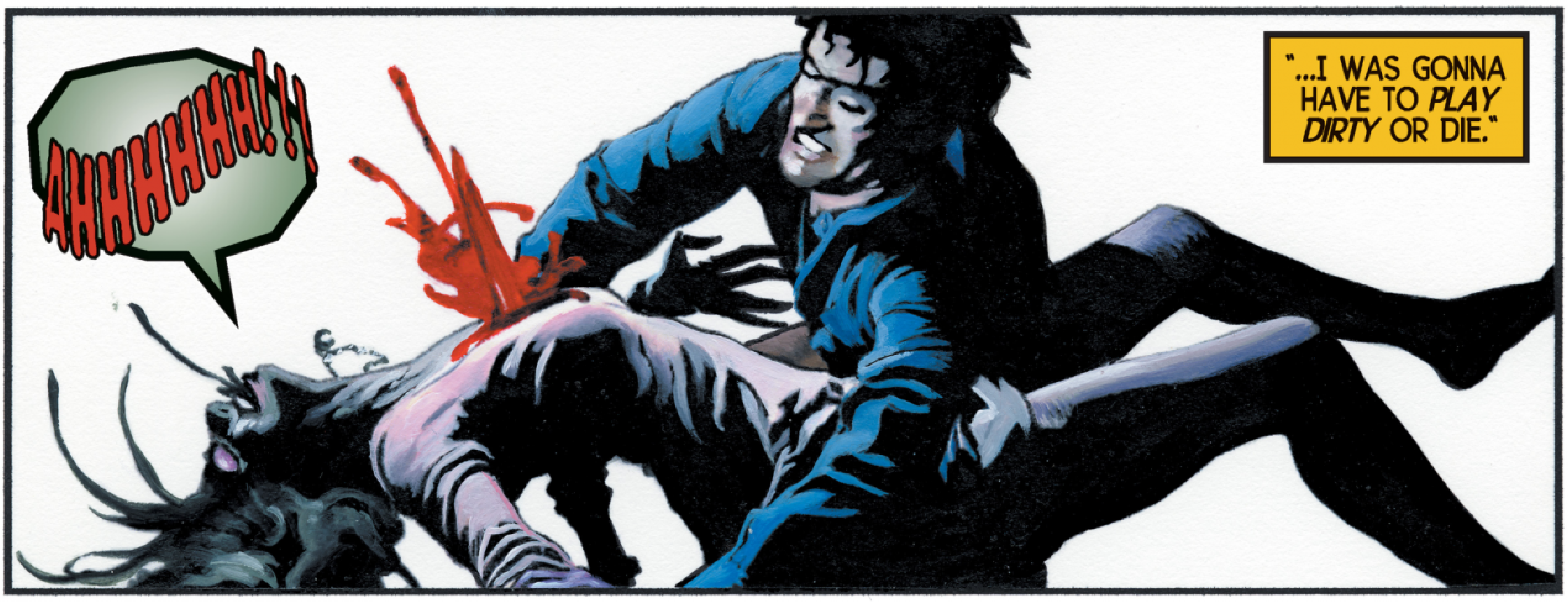

"SCOTTY...THEY'D PUT HIM DOWN FOR THE *DIRT NAP.*"
HEH HEH HEEEEH!

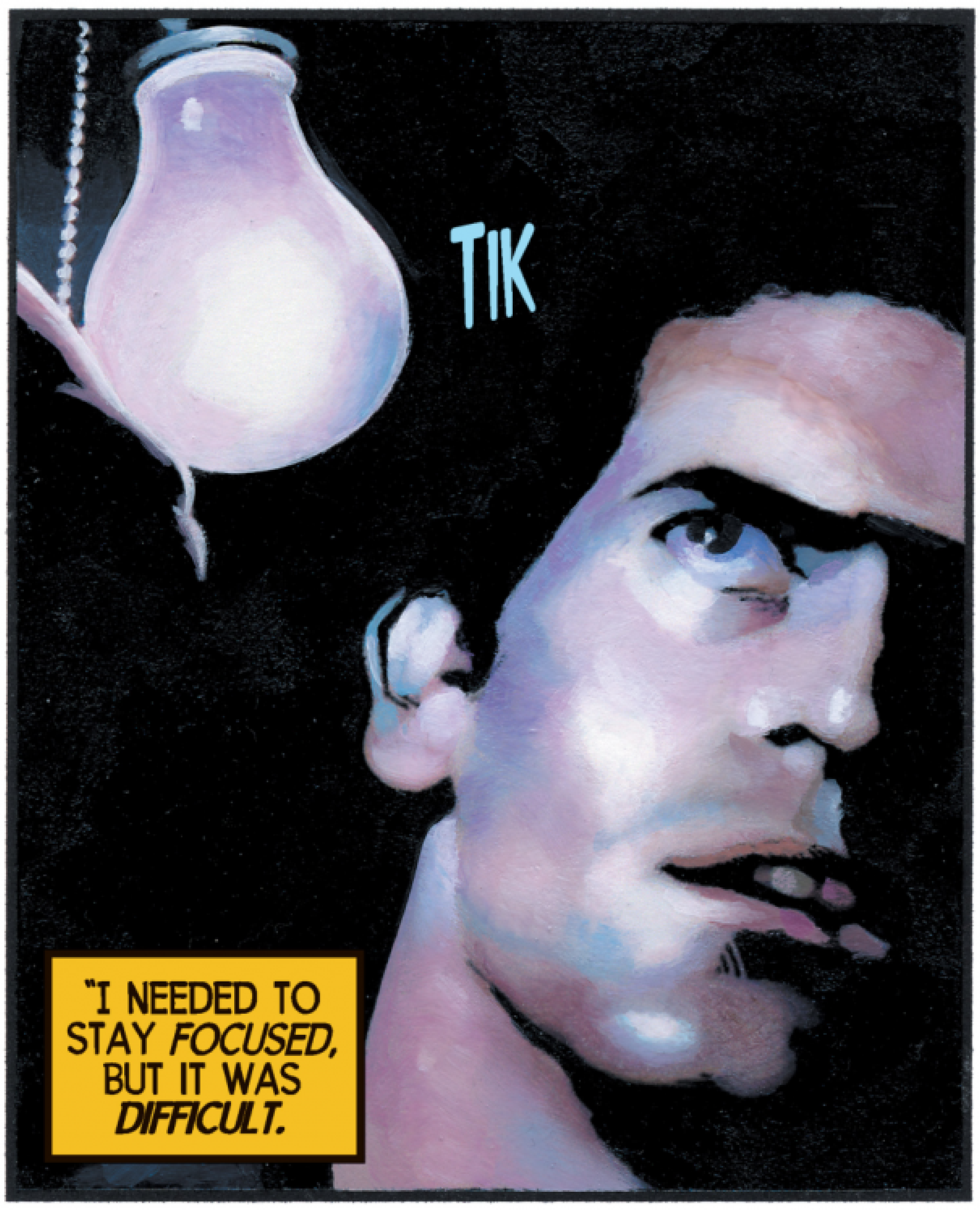

"THE *HELLSPAWN* WERE JUST GETTIN' *WARMED UP*."
YEEEEEEGHH!!

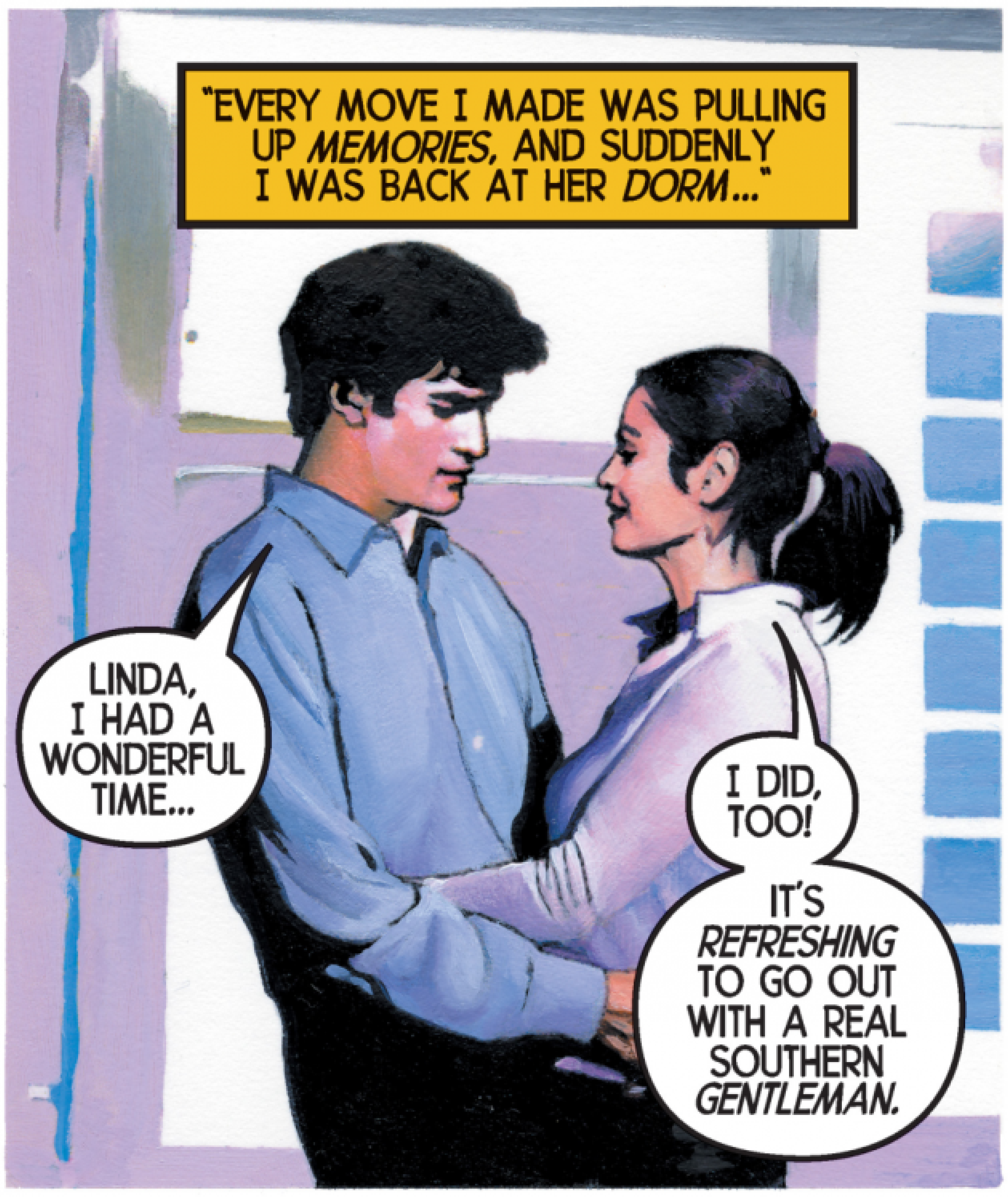

EEEEYARGHHH!!
GYAAGH!
"SHE LICKED THAT KNIFE LIKE A KID LICKING THE FROSTING OFF A *BIRTHDAY CANDLE,* AND SUDDENLY I *KNEW...*
"...THEY WANTED MY *BLOOD...* AND *LINDA* WAS JUST AS DEAD AS *SCOTTY.*"
HEE HEE HEEEE...
"BASTARDS HAD *TAKEN* HER, JUST LIKE CHERYL AND SHELLY.

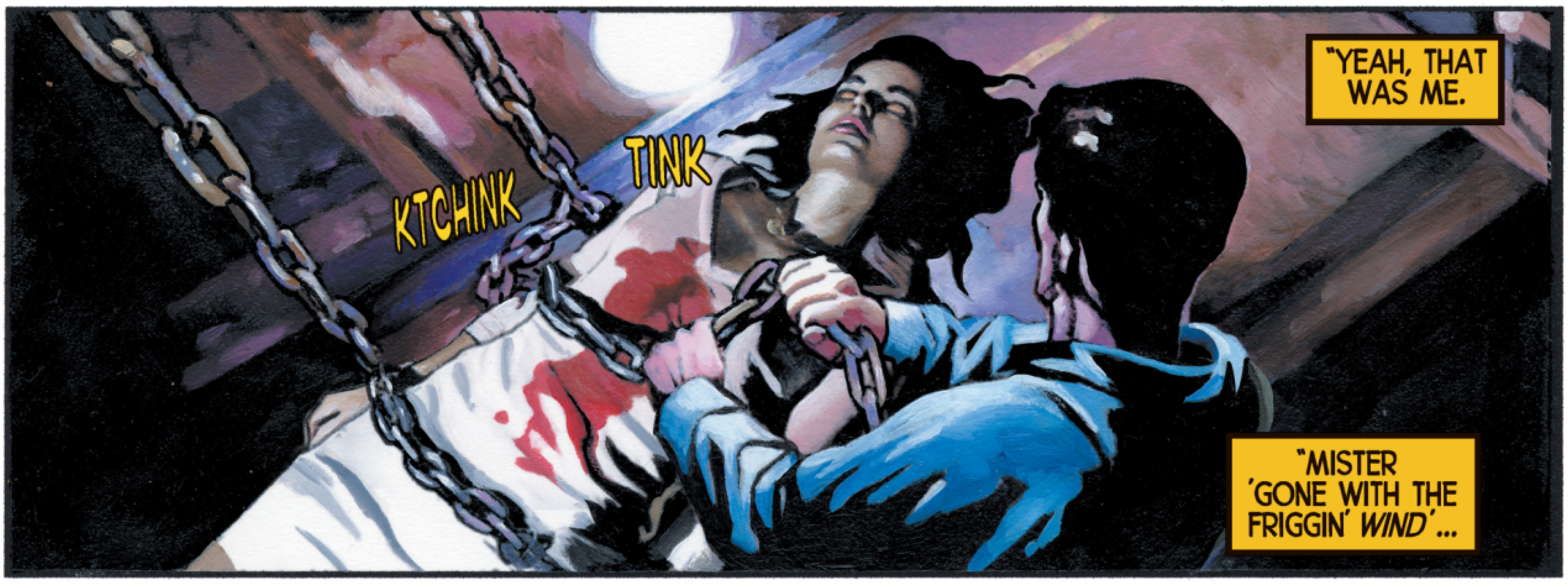

"AND I COULDN'T *CARE* ANYMORE.
"WHATEVER THE *HELL* HAD CRAWLED *INSIDE* THEM...

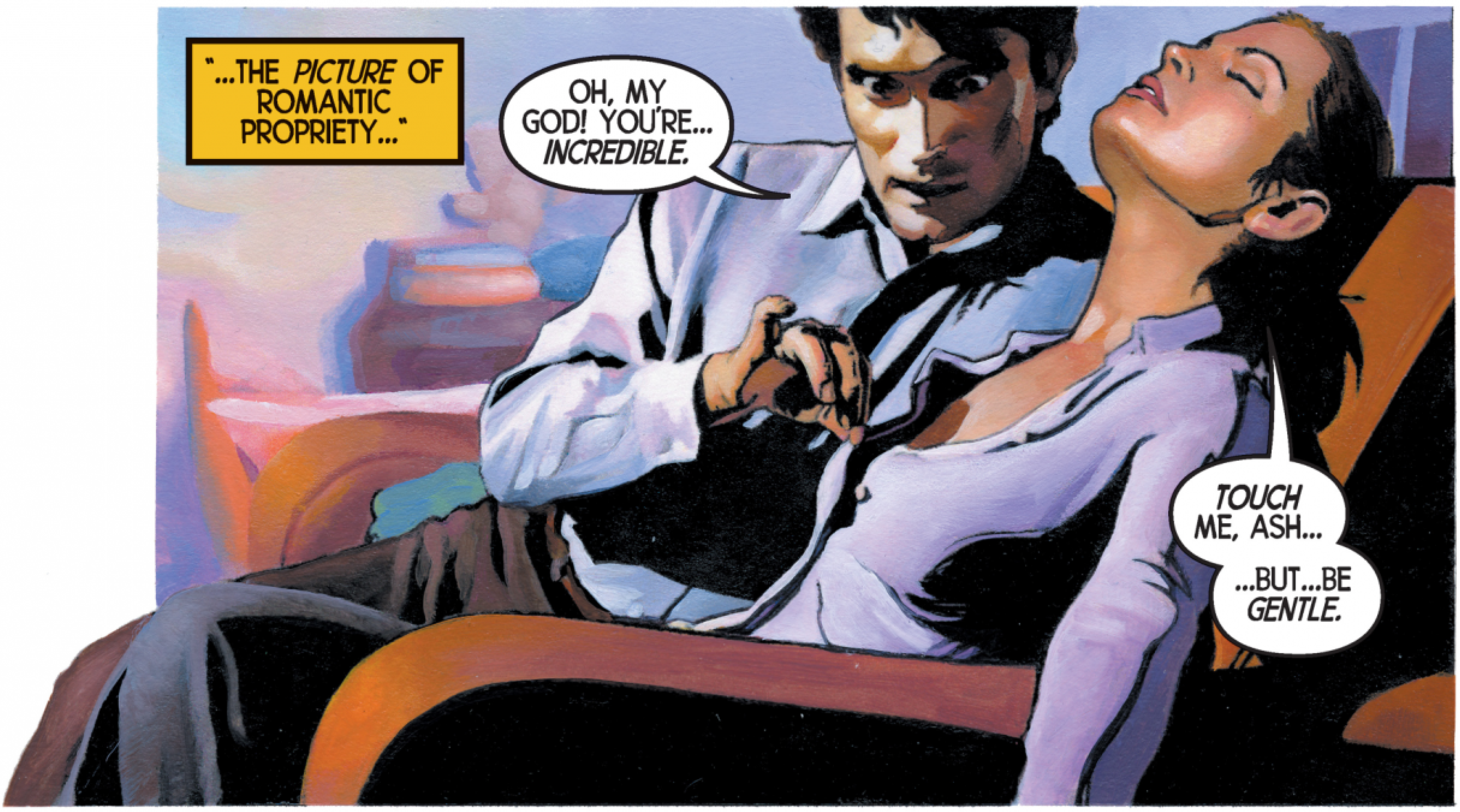

"...*KANDARIAN DEMON-SCUM* OR JUST A BAD CASE OF *CAT SCRATCH FEVER...*"

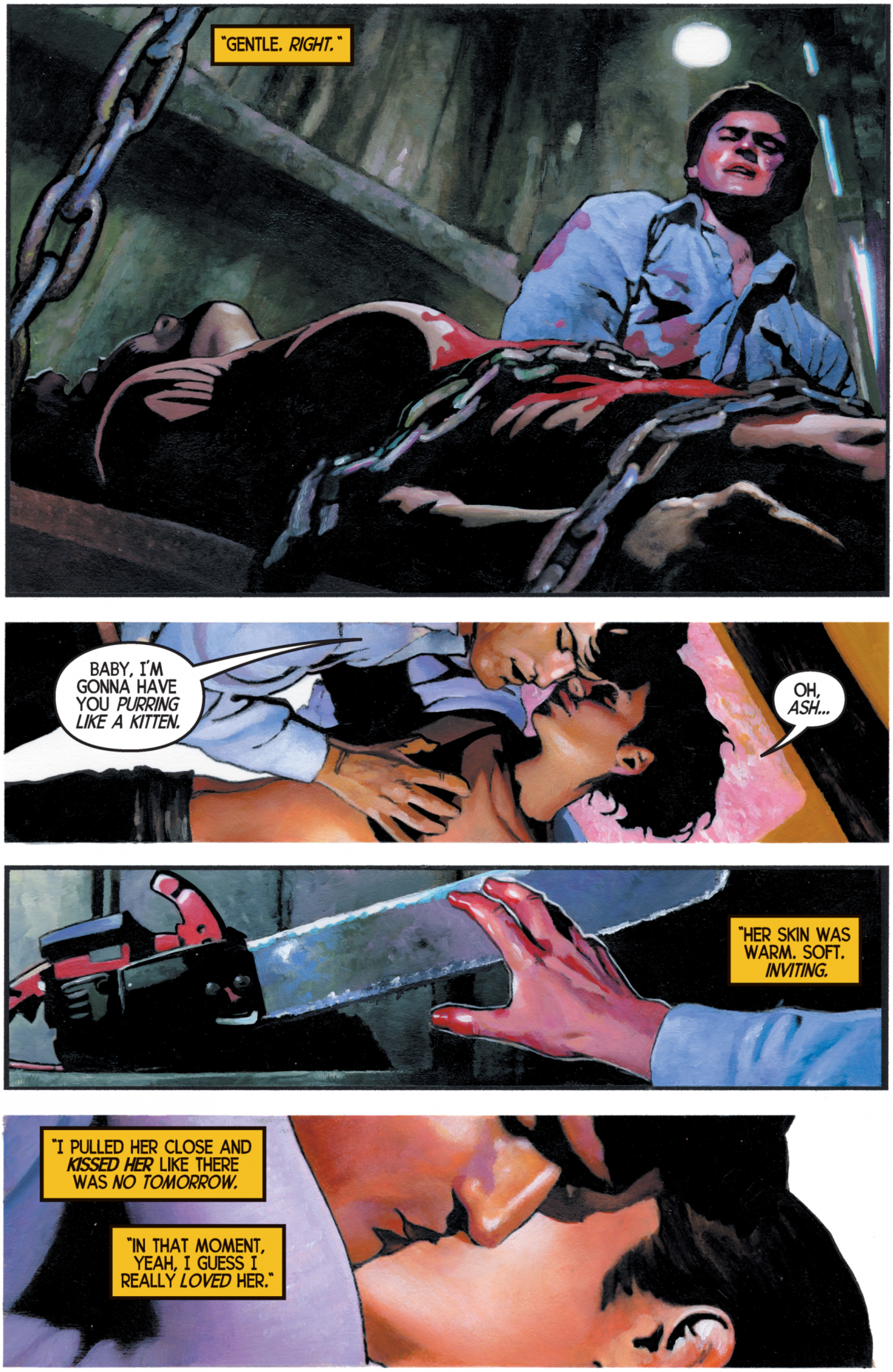

AHHHHHHH!!!
"...I WAS GONNA HAVE TO *PLAY DIRTY* OR DIE."

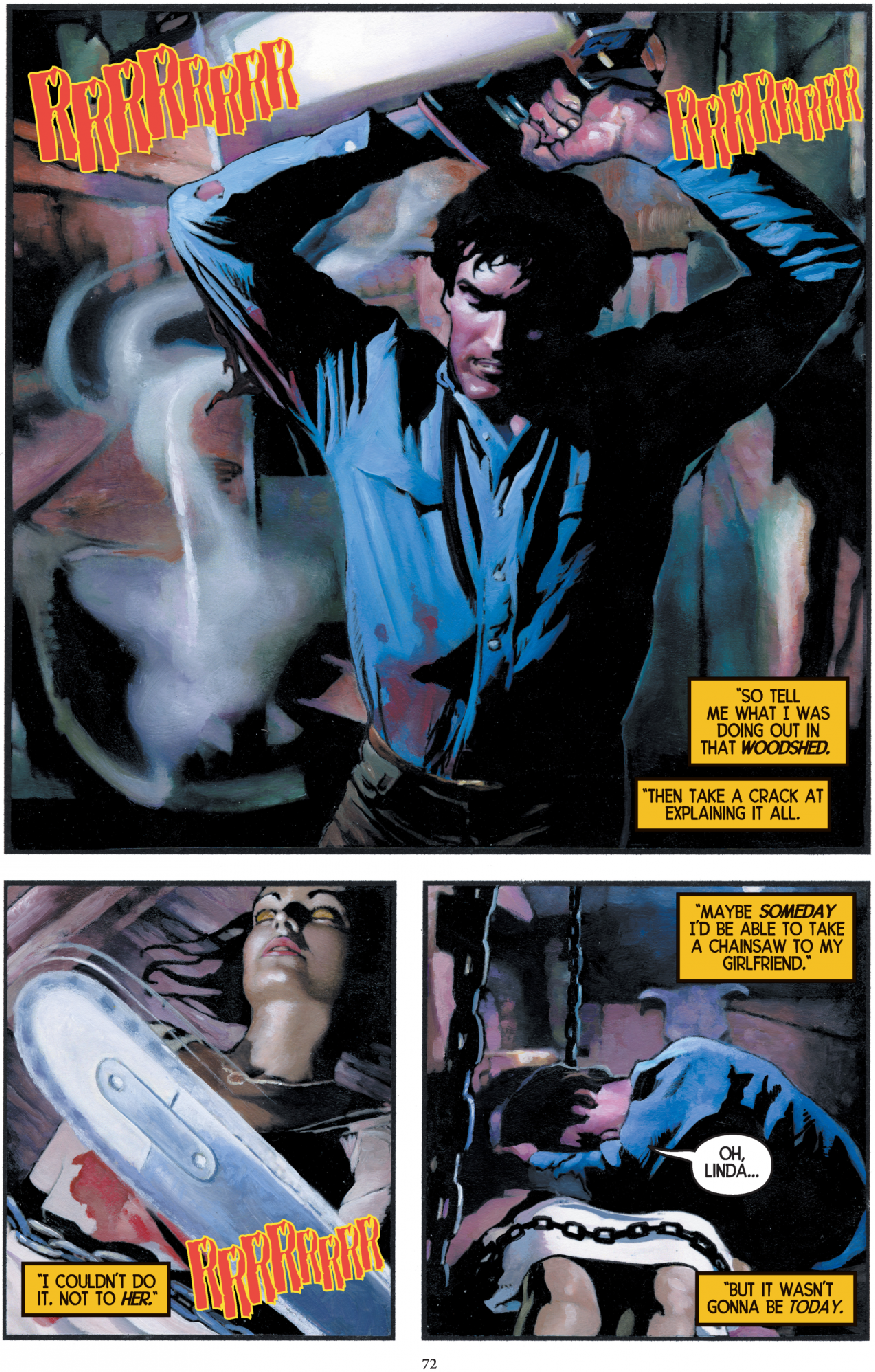

TIK
"I NEEDED TO STAY *FOCUSED,* BUT IT WAS *DIFFICULT.*

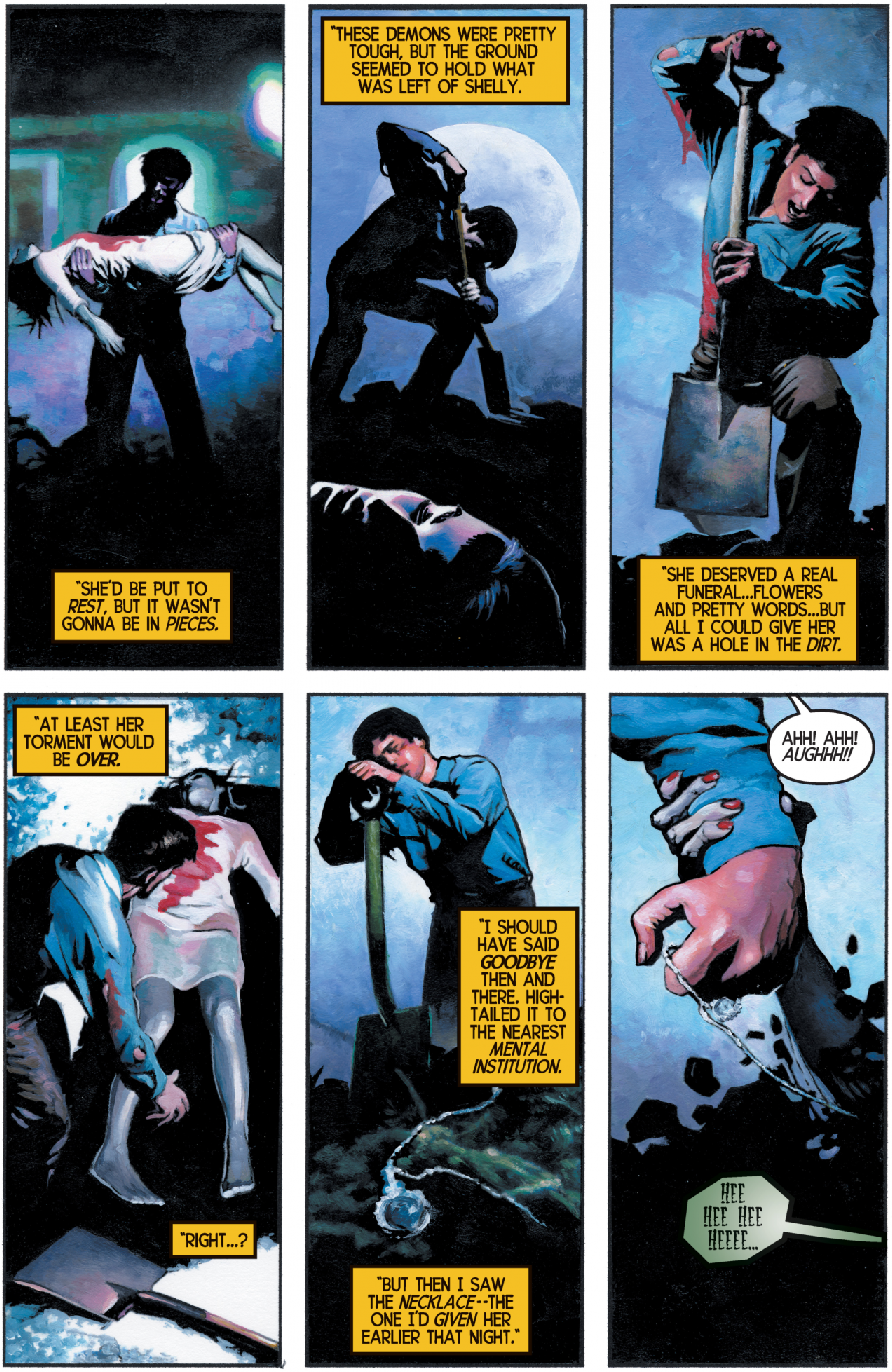

"EVERY MOVE I MADE WAS PULLING UP *MEMORIES,* AND SUDDENLY I WAS BACK AT HER *DORM...*"
LINDA, I HAD A WONDERFUL TIME...
I DID, TOO!
IT'S *REFRESHING* TO GO OUT WITH A REAL SOUTHERN *GENTLEMAN.*

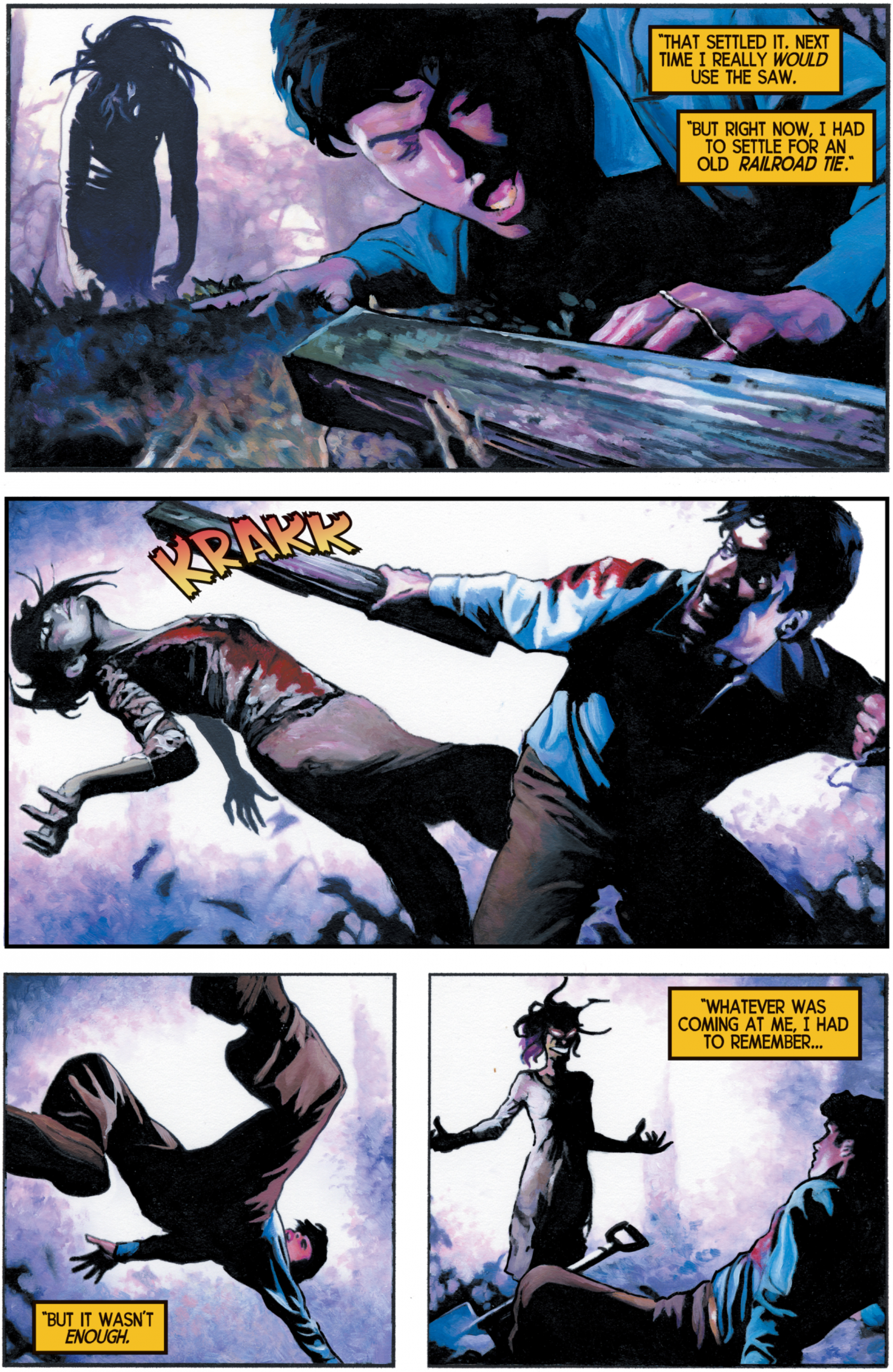

"YEAH, THAT WAS ME.
KTCHINK
TINK
"MISTER 'GONE WITH THE FRIGGIN' *WIND'...*

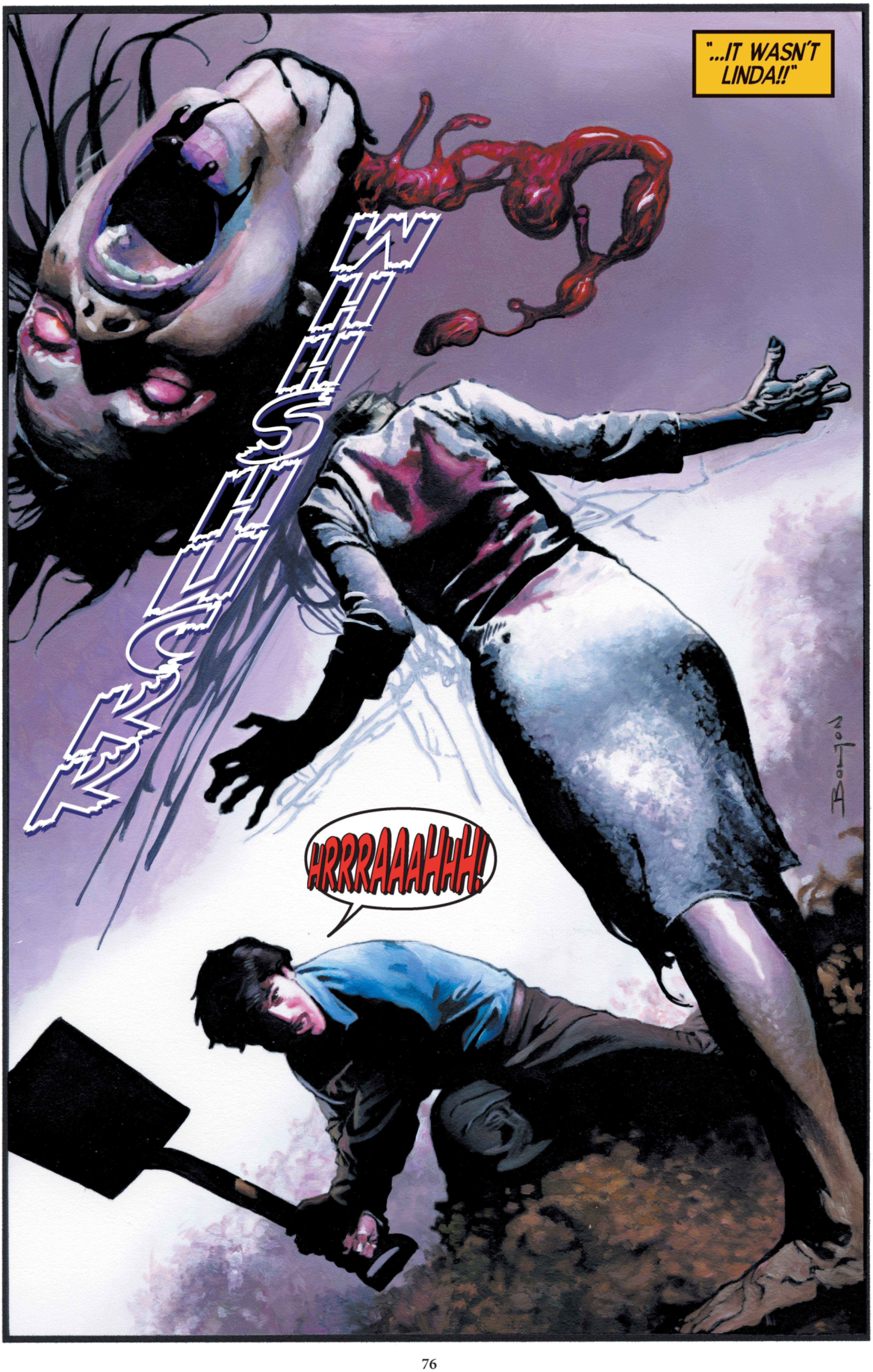

"...THE *PICTURE* OF ROMANTIC PROPRIETY..."
OH, MY GOD! YOU'RE... *INCREDIBLE.*
TOUCH ME, ASH...
...BUT...BE *GENTLE.*


"GENTLE. *RIGHT.*"
BABY, I'M GONNA HAVE YOU *PURRING LIKE A KITTEN.*
OH, *ASH...*
"HER SKIN WAS WARM. SOFT. *INVITING.*
"I PULLED HER CLOSE AND *KISSED HER* LIKE THERE WAS *NO TOMORROW.*
"IN THAT MOMENT, YEAH, I GUESS I REALLY *LOVED* HER."


RRRRRRRRR
RRRRRRRRR
"SO TELL ME WHAT I WAS DOING OUT IN THAT *WOODSHED.*
"THEN TAKE A CRACK AT EXPLAINING IT ALL.
"I COULDN'T DO IT. NOT TO *HER.*"
RRRRRRRRR
"MAYBE *SOMEDAY* I'D BE ABLE TO TAKE A CHAINSAW TO MY GIRLFRIEND."
OH, LINDA...
"BUT IT WASN'T GONNA BE *TODAY.*

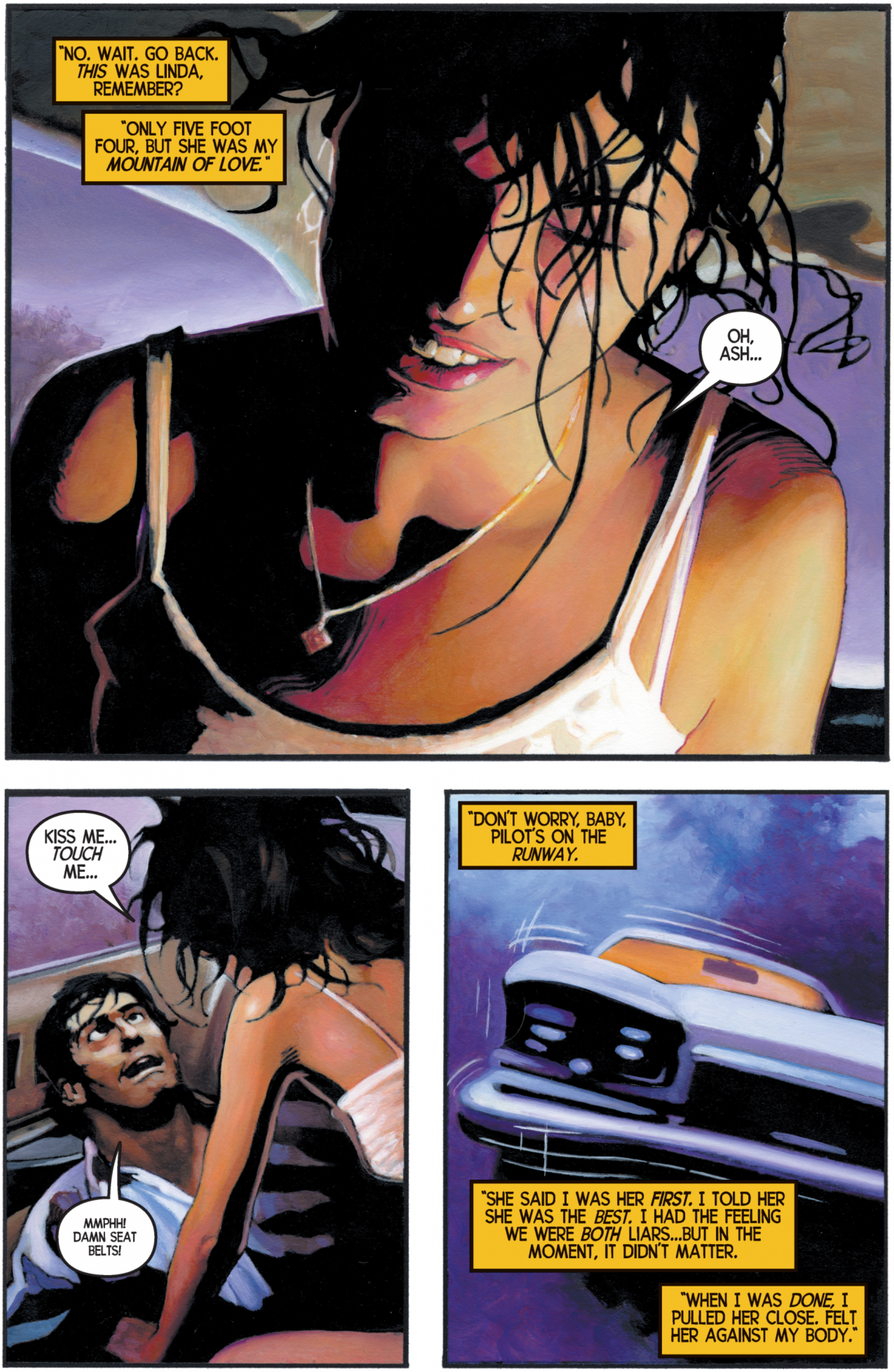

"SHE'D BE PUT TO *REST*, BUT IT WASN'T GONNA BE IN *PIECES.*
"THESE DEMONS WERE PRETTY TOUGH, BUT THE GROUND SEEMED TO HOLD WHAT WAS LEFT OF SHELLY.
"SHE DESERVED A REAL FUNERAL...FLOWERS AND PRETTY WORDS...BUT ALL I COULD GIVE HER WAS A HOLE IN THE *DIRT.*
"AT LEAST HER TORMENT WOULD BE *OVER.*
"RIGHT...?
"I SHOULD HAVE SAID *GOODBYE* THEN AND THERE. HIGH-TAILED IT TO THE NEAREST *MENTAL INSTITUTION.*
"BUT THEN I SAW THE *NECKLACE*--THE ONE I'D *GIVEN* HER EARLIER THAT NIGHT."
AHH! AHH! *AUGHHH!!*
HEE HEE HEE HEEEE...

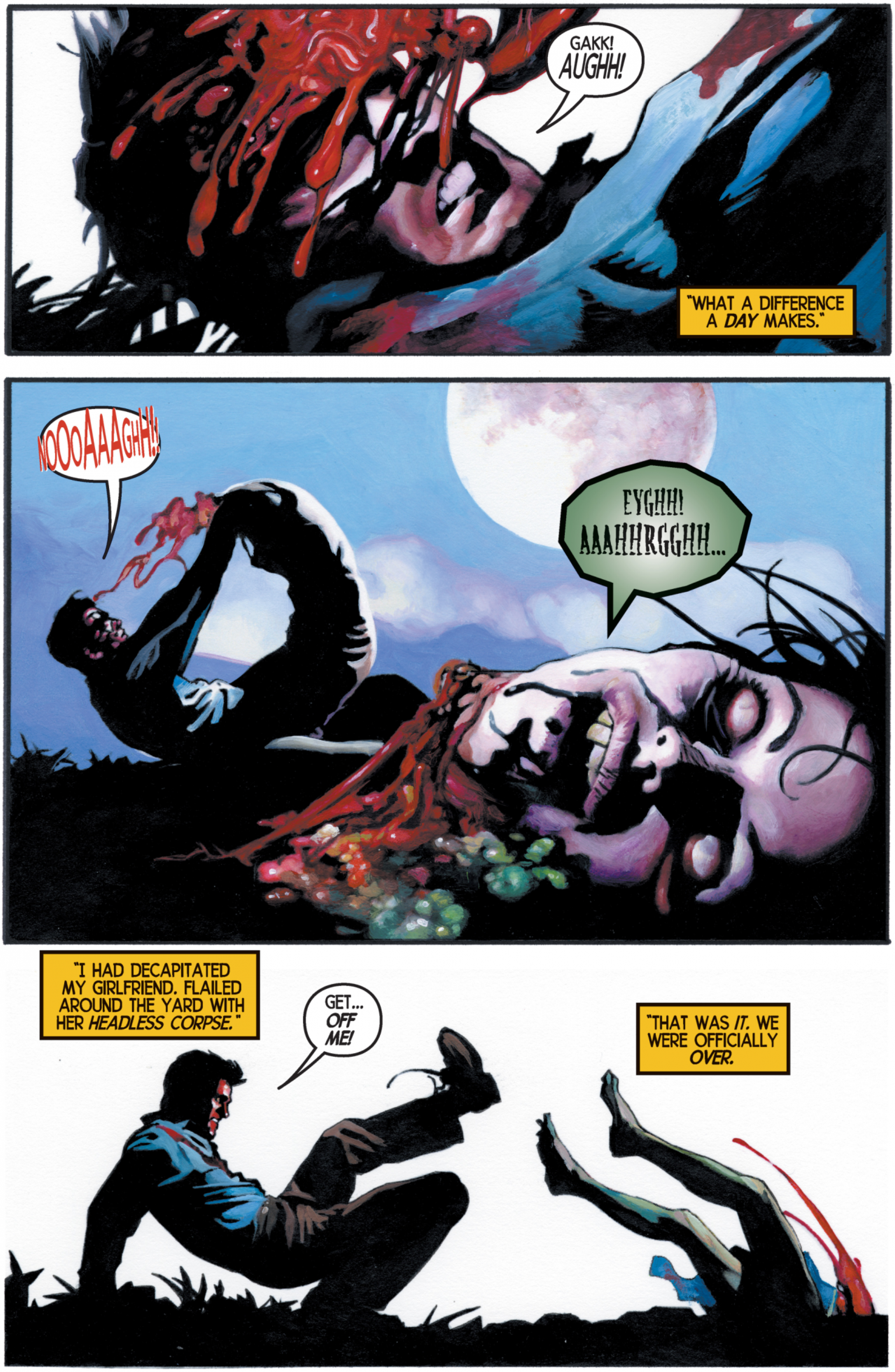

"THAT SETTLED IT. NEXT TIME I REALLY *WOULD* USE THE SAW.
"BUT RIGHT NOW, I HAD TO SETTLE FOR AN OLD *RAILROAD TIE*."
KRAKK
"BUT IT WASN'T *ENOUGH.*
"WHATEVER WAS COMING AT ME, I HAD TO REMEMBER...

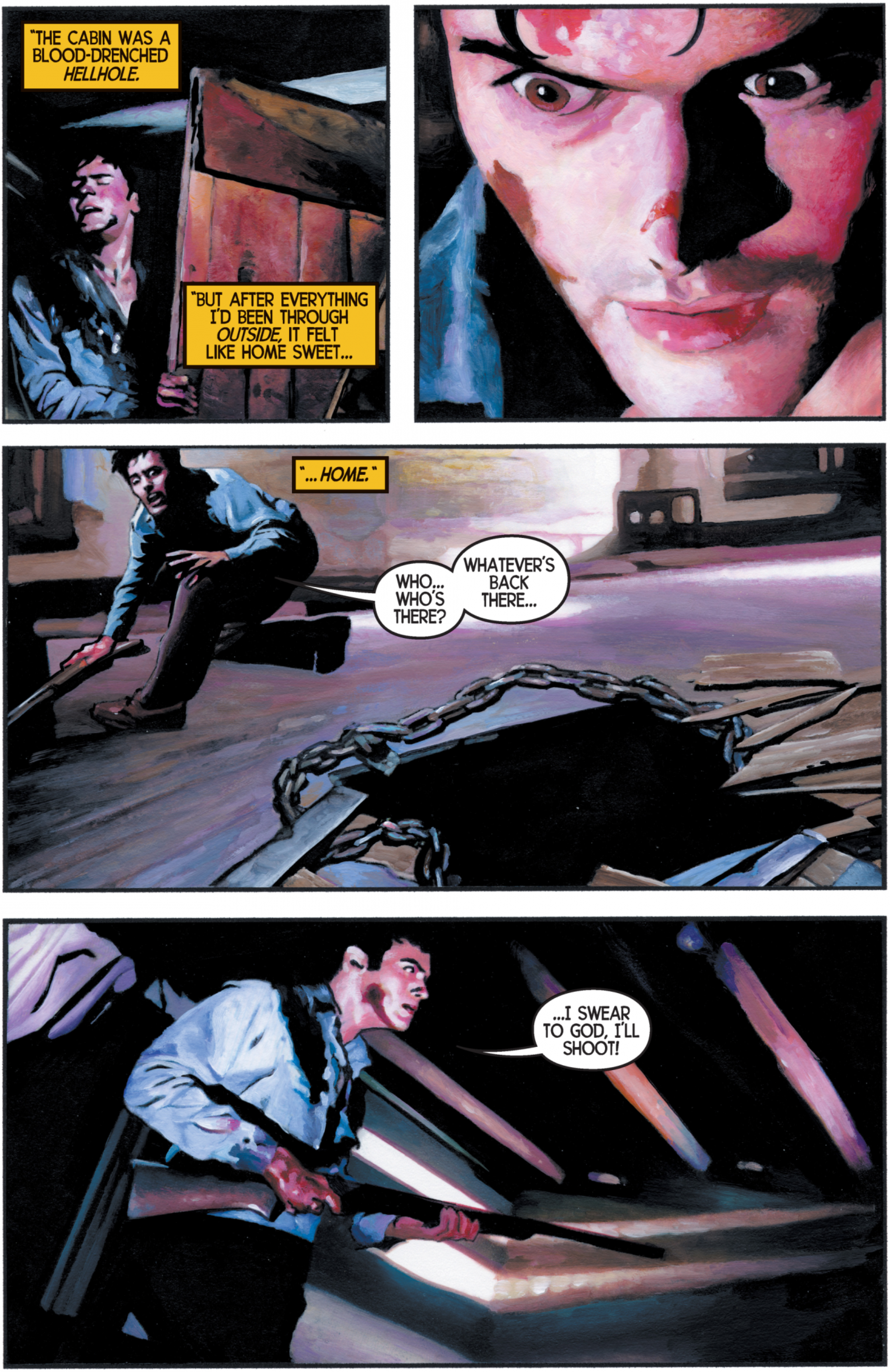

"...IT WASN'T LINDA!!"
WHHSHUCK
HRRRAAAHHH!
Bolton

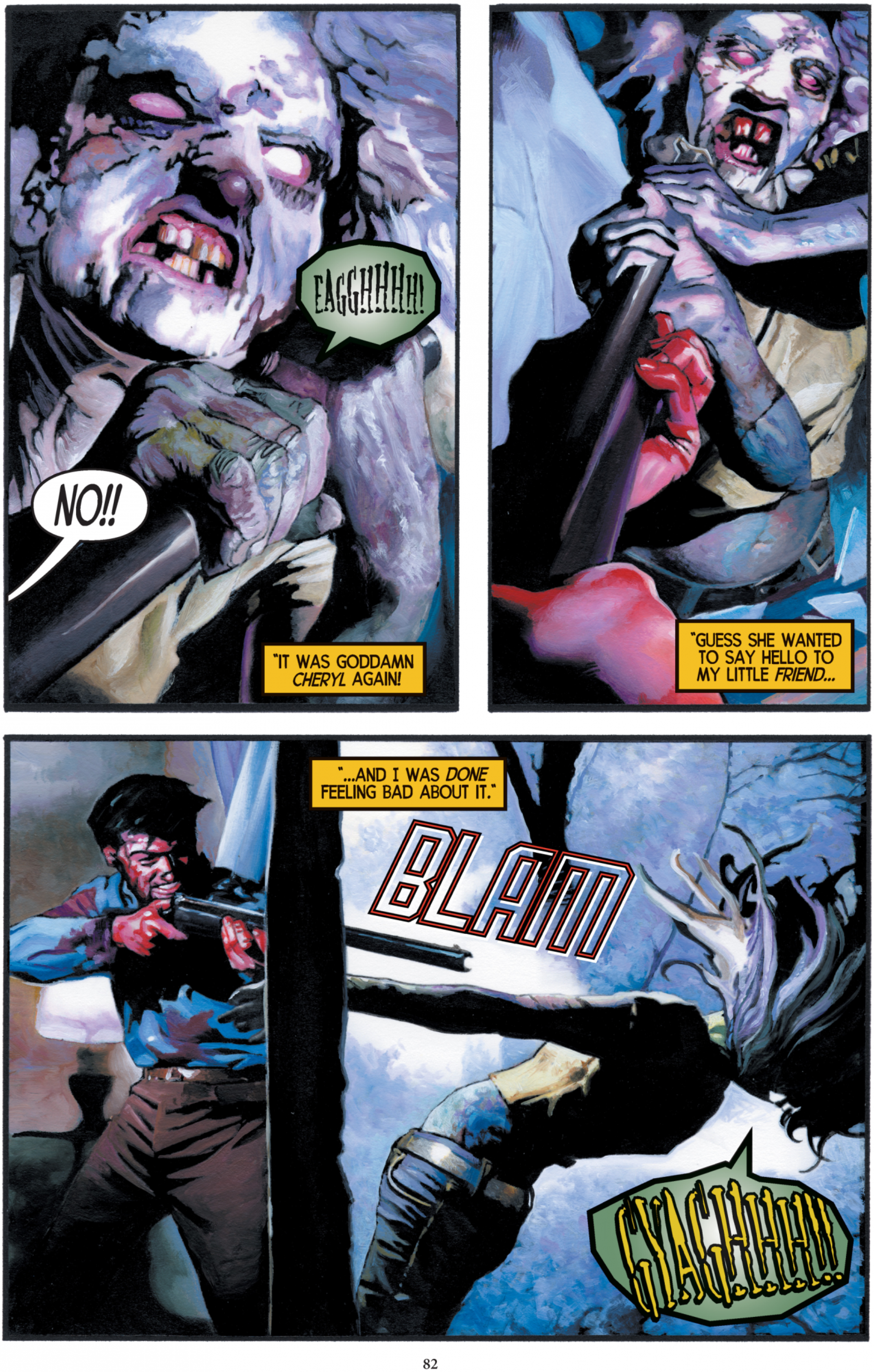
CHAPTER FOUR

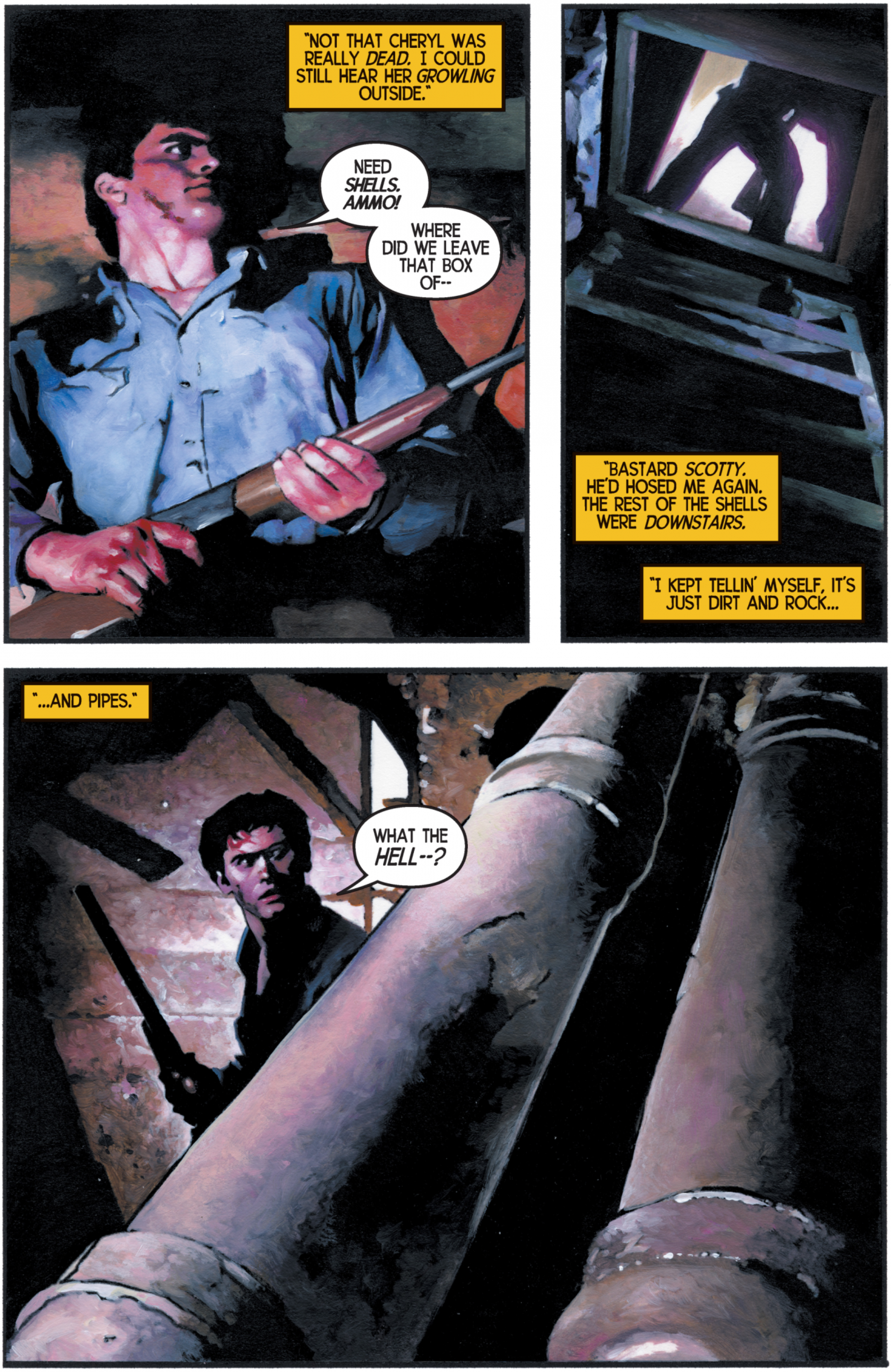
"WHAT A DIFFERENCE A DAY MAKES."

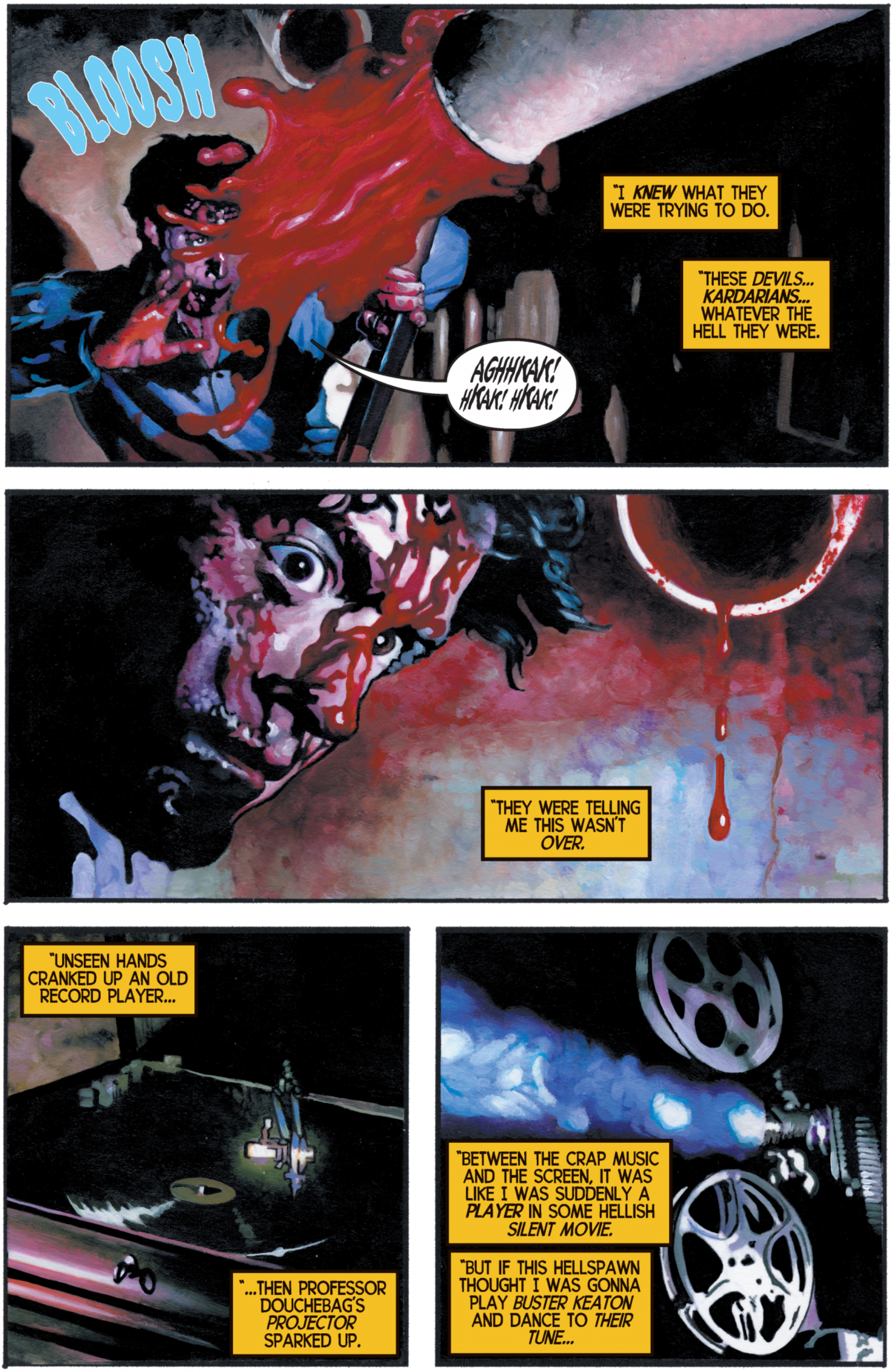

"NO. WAIT. GO BACK. *THIS* WAS LINDA, REMEMBER?
"ONLY FIVE FOOT FOUR, BUT SHE WAS MY *MOUNTAIN OF LOVE.*"
OH, ASH...
KISS ME... *TOUCH* ME...
MMPHH! DAMN SEAT BELTS!
"DON'T WORRY, BABY, PILOT'S ON THE *RUNWAY.*
"SHE SAID I WAS HER *FIRST.* I TOLD HER SHE WAS THE *BEST.* I HAD THE FEELING WE WERE *BOTH* LIARS...BUT IN THE MOMENT, IT DIDN'T MATTER.
"WHEN I WAS *DONE,* I PULLED HER CLOSE. FELT HER AGAINST MY BODY."

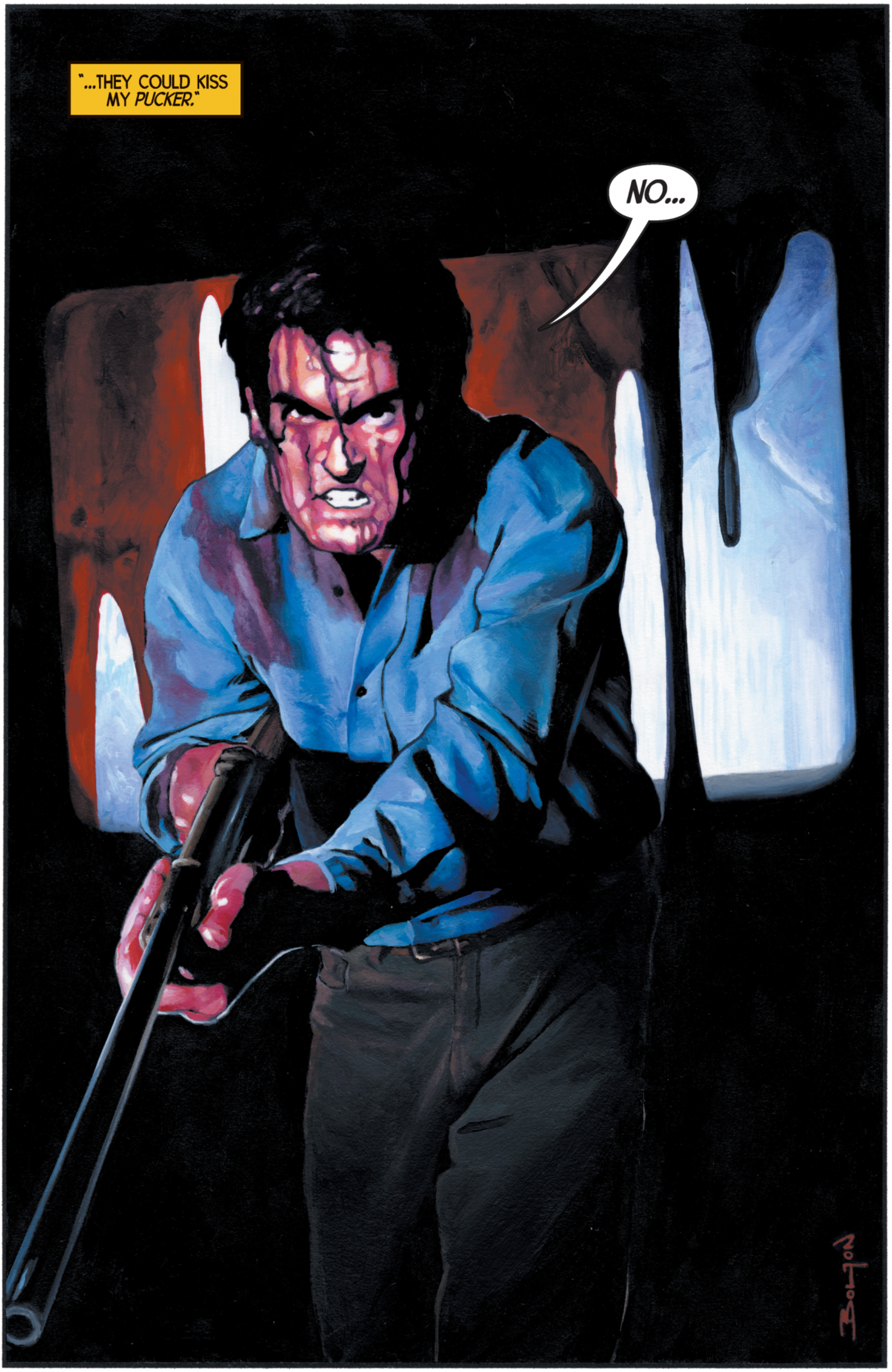

GAKK! AUGHH!
"WHAT A DIFFERENCE A DAY MAKES."
NOOOAAAGHH!!
EYGHH! AAAHHRGGHH...
"I HAD DECAPITATED MY GIRLFRIEND. FLAILED AROUND THE YARD WITH HER HEADLESS CORPSE."
GET... OFF ME!
"THAT WAS IT. WE WERE OFFICIALLY OVER."

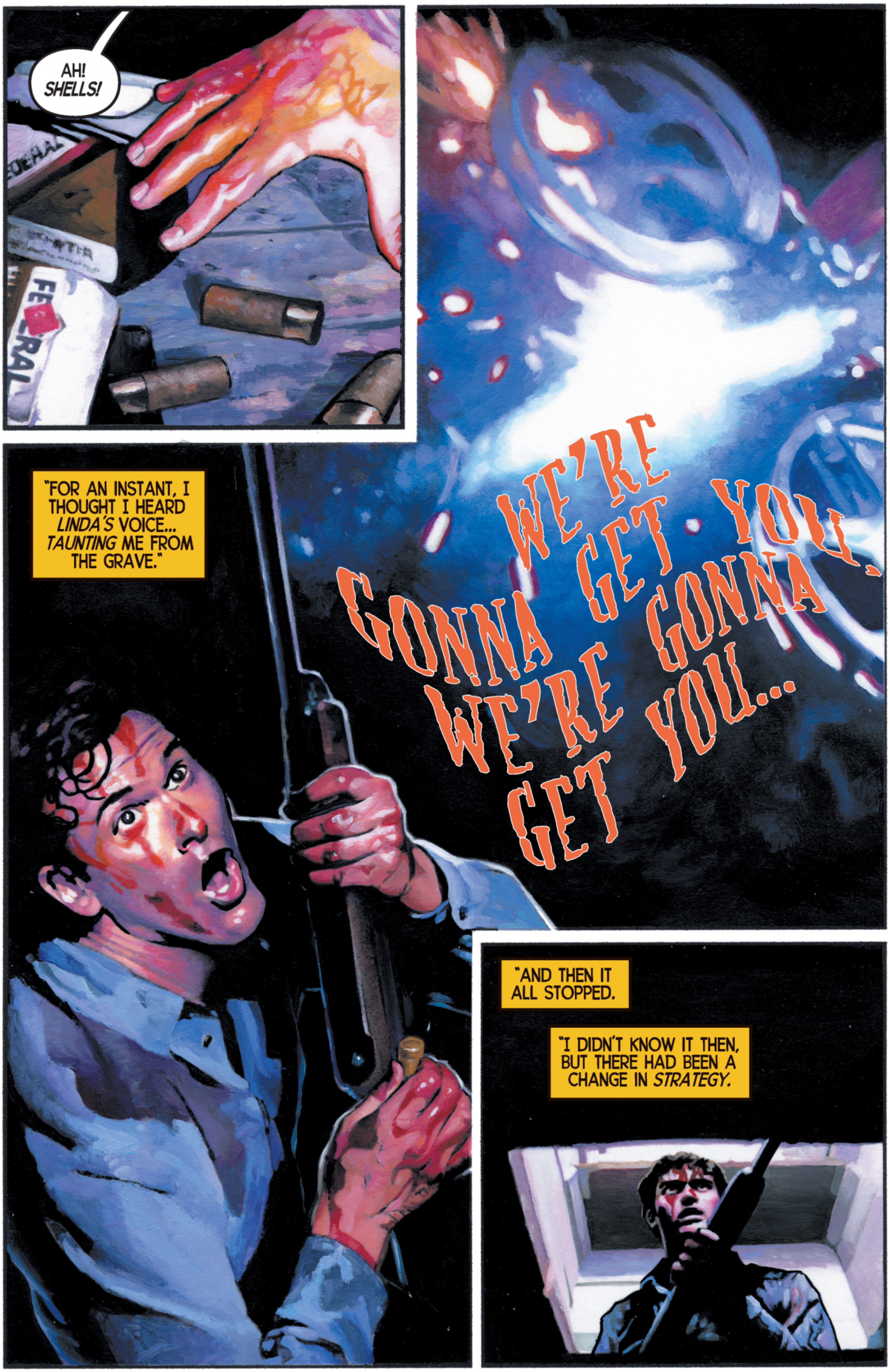

"THE CABIN WAS A BLOOD-DRENCHED *HELLHOLE.*
"BUT AFTER EVERYTHING I'D BEEN THROUGH *OUTSIDE,* IT FELT LIKE HOME SWEET...
"...*HOME.*"
WHO... WHO'S THERE?
WHATEVER'S BACK THERE...
...I SWEAR TO GOD, I'LL SHOOT!

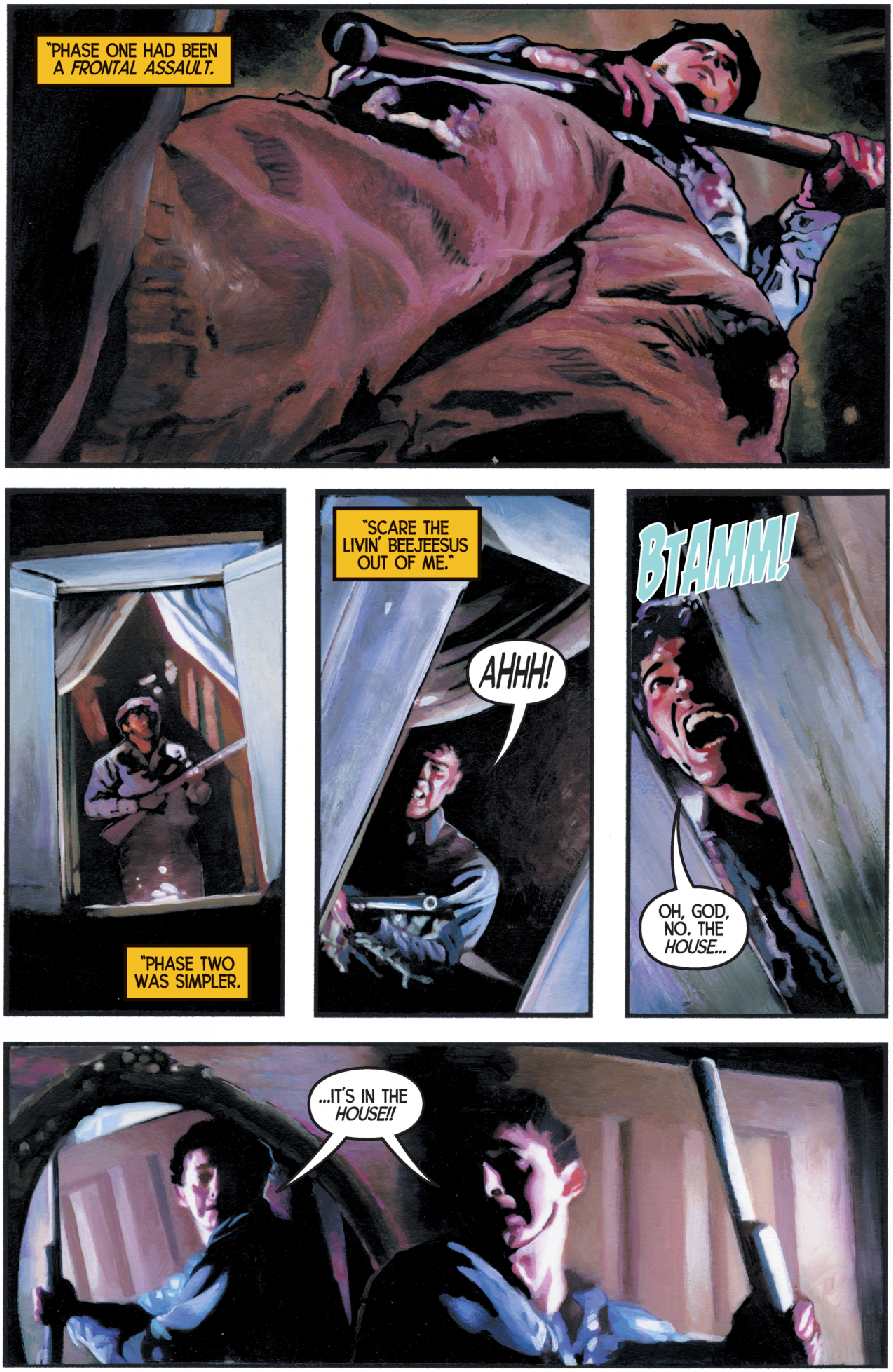

EAGGHHHH!
NO!!
"IT WAS GODDAMN *CHERYL* AGAIN!
"GUESS SHE WANTED TO SAY HELLO TO MY LITTLE *FRIEND*...
"...AND I WAS *DONE* FEELING BAD ABOUT IT."
BLAM
GYAGHHHH!!

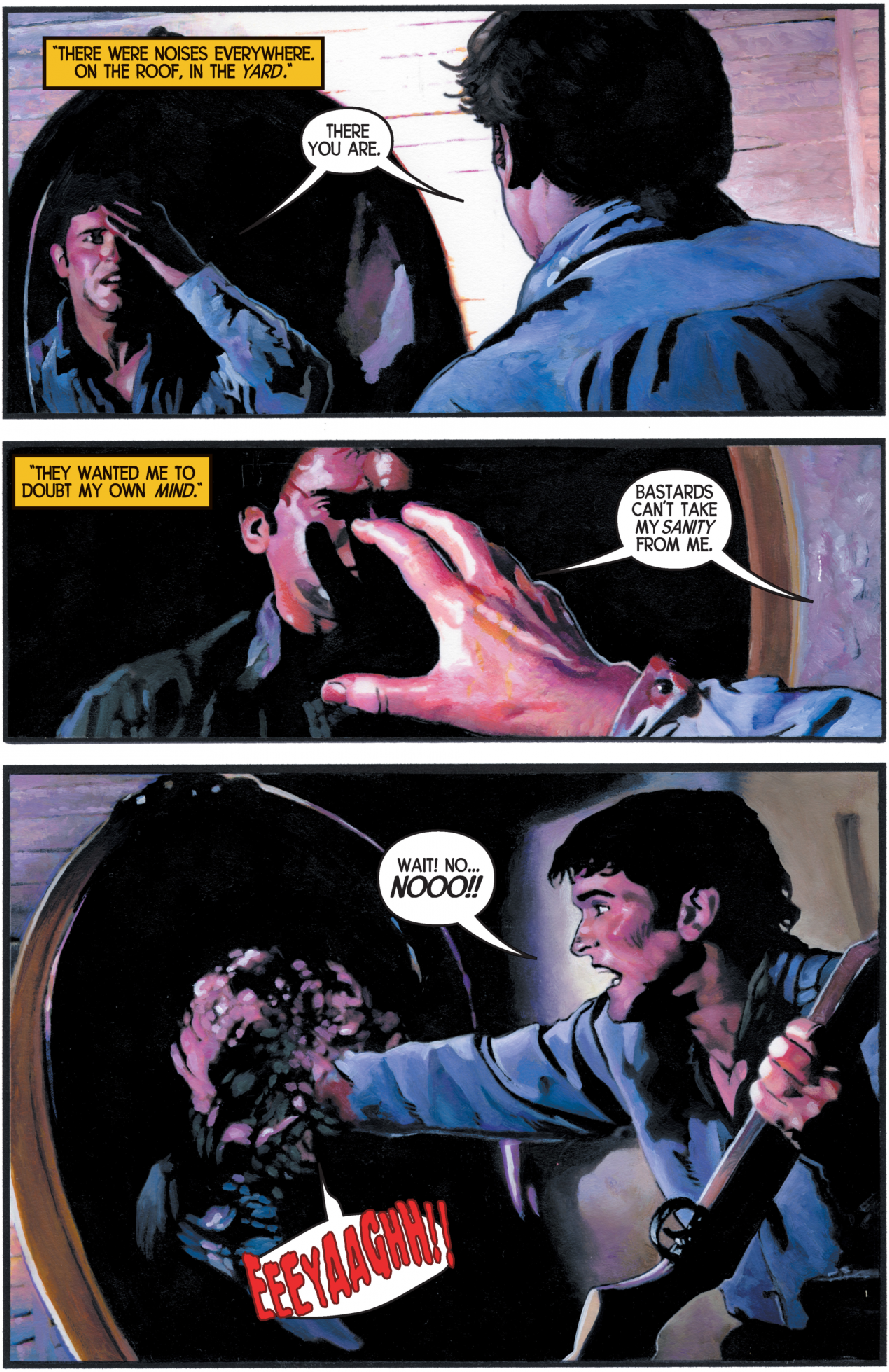

"NOT THAT CHERYL WAS REALLY *DEAD.* I COULD STILL HEAR HER *GROWLING* OUTSIDE."
NEED *SHELLS. AMMO!*
WHERE DID WE LEAVE THAT BOX OF--
"BASTARD *SCOTTY.* HE'D HOSED ME AGAIN. THE REST OF THE SHELLS WERE *DOWNSTAIRS.*
"I KEPT TELLIN' MYSELF, IT'S JUST DIRT AND ROCK...
"...AND PIPES."
WHAT THE *HELL--?*

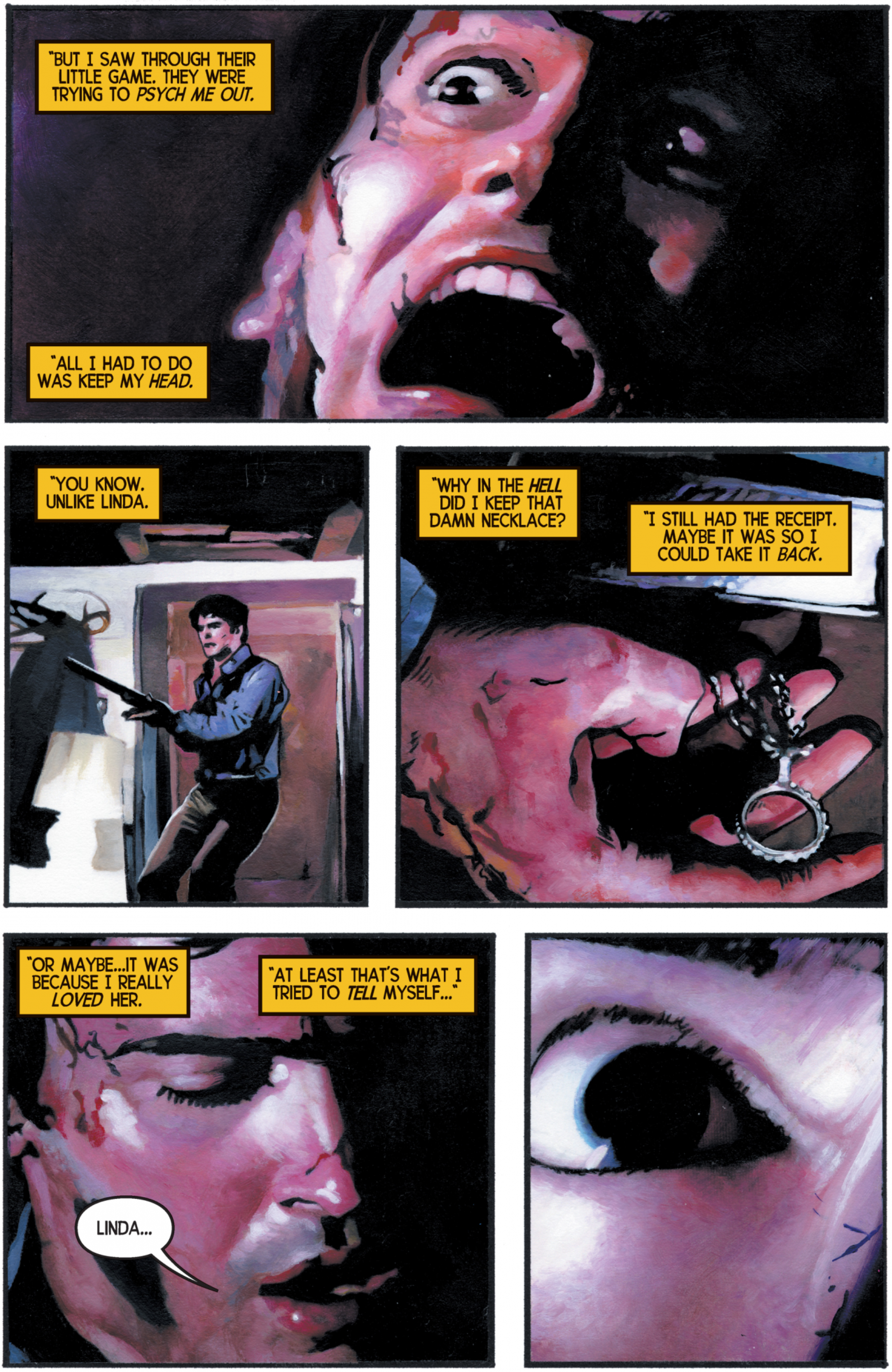

BLOOSH
"I *KNEW* WHAT THEY WERE TRYING TO DO.
"THESE *DEVILS... KARDARIANS...* WHATEVER THE HELL THEY WERE.
AGHHKAK! HKAK! HKAK!
"THEY WERE TELLING ME THIS WASN'T *OVER.*
"UNSEEN HANDS CRANKED UP AN OLD RECORD PLAYER...
"...THEN PROFESSOR DOUCHEBAG'S *PROJECTOR* SPARKED UP.
"BETWEEN THE CRAP MUSIC AND THE SCREEN, IT WAS LIKE I WAS SUDDENLY A *PLAYER* IN SOME HELLISH *SILENT MOVIE.*
"BUT IF THIS HELLSPAWN THOUGHT I WAS GONNA PLAY *BUSTER KEATON* AND DANCE TO *THEIR* TUNE...

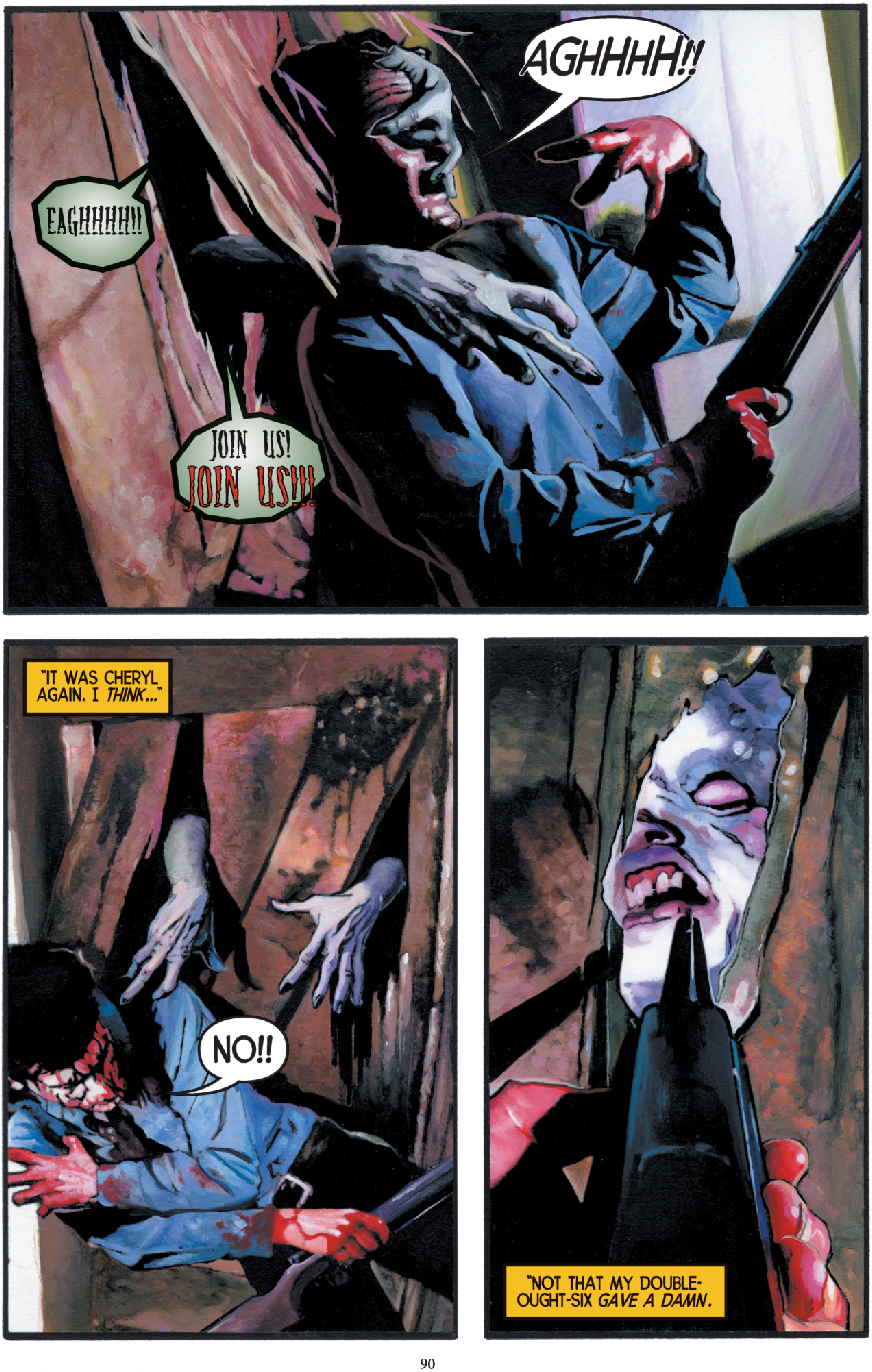

"...THEY COULD KISS MY *PUCKER.*"
NO...
BOLTON

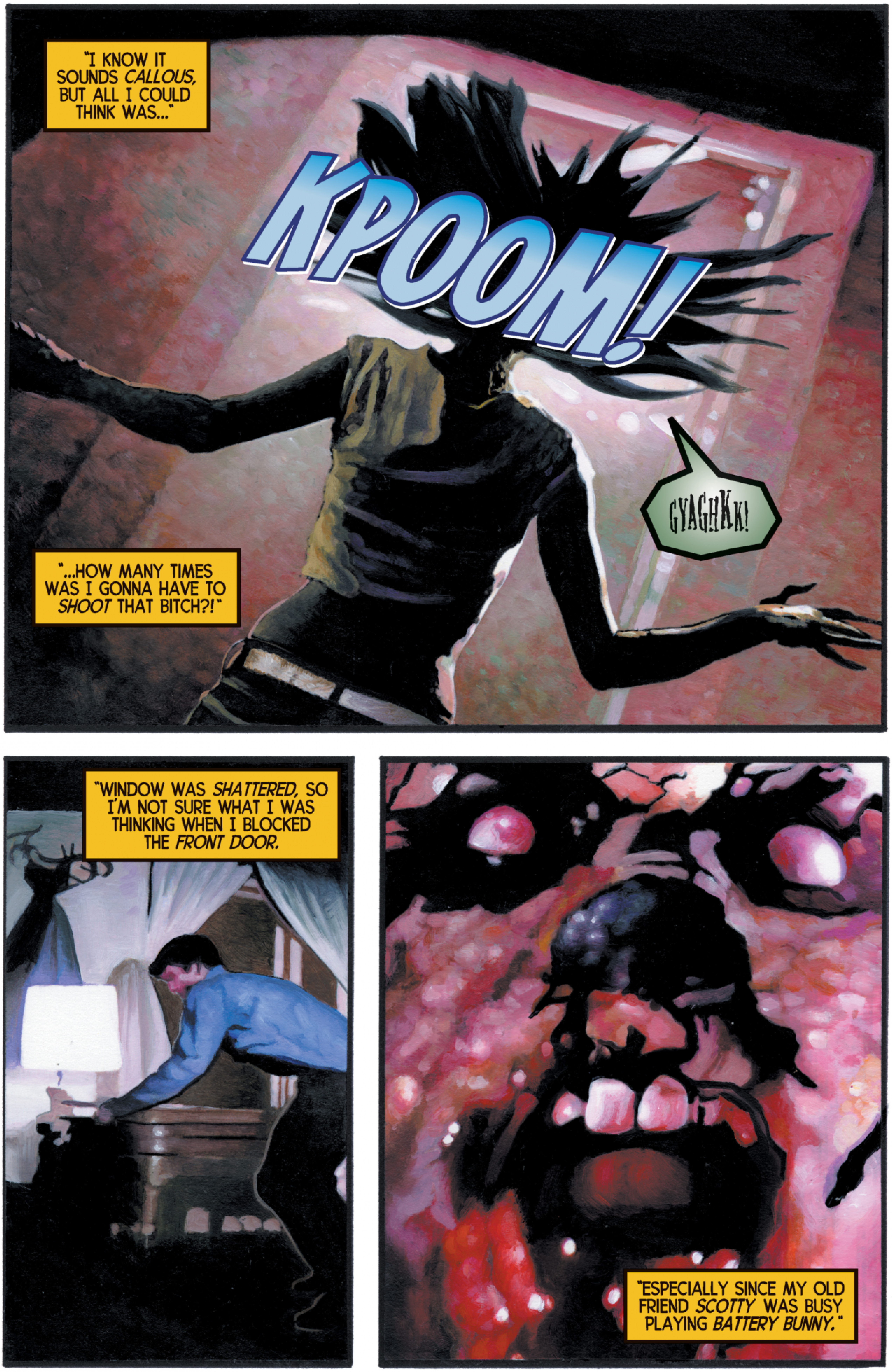

AH! *SHELLS!*
"FOR AN INSTANT, I THOUGHT I HEARD *LINDA'S* VOICE... *TAUNTING* ME FROM THE GRAVE."
WE'RE GONNA GET YOU. WE'RE GONNA GET YOU...
"AND THEN IT ALL STOPPED.
"I DIDN'T KNOW IT THEN, BUT THERE HAD BEEN A CHANGE IN *STRATEGY.*

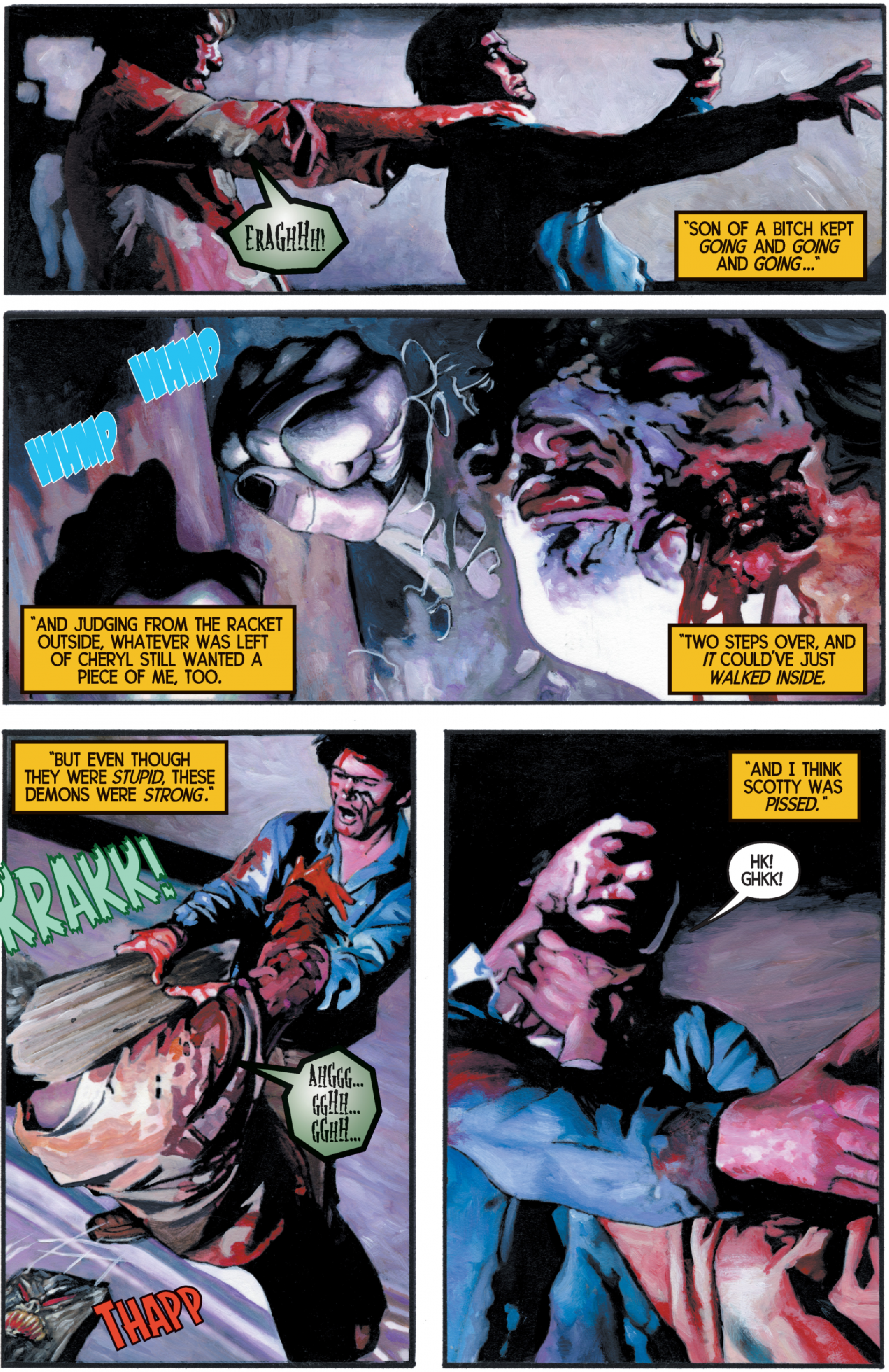

"PHASE ONE HAD BEEN A *FRONTAL ASSAULT.*
"PHASE TWO WAS SIMPLER.
"SCARE THE LIVIN' BEEJEESUS OUT OF ME."
AHHH!
BTAMM!
OH, GOD, NO. THE *HOUSE*...
...IT'S IN THE *HOUSE!!*

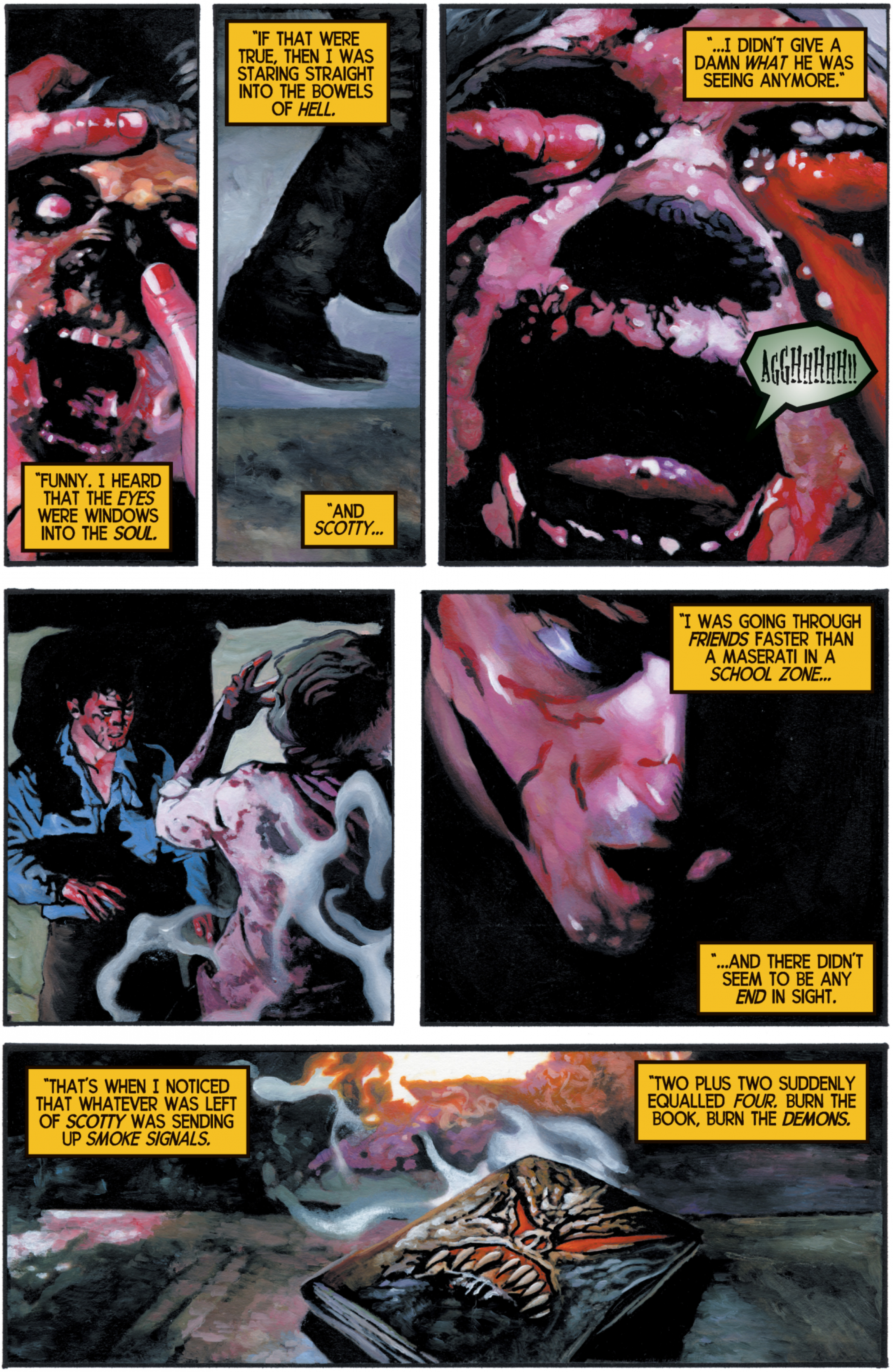

"THERE WERE NOISES EVERYWHERE. ON THE ROOF, IN THE *YARD*."
THERE YOU ARE.
"THEY WANTED ME TO DOUBT MY OWN *MIND*."
BASTARDS CAN'T TAKE MY *SANITY* FROM ME.
WAIT! NO... ***NOOO!!***
EEEYAAGHH!!

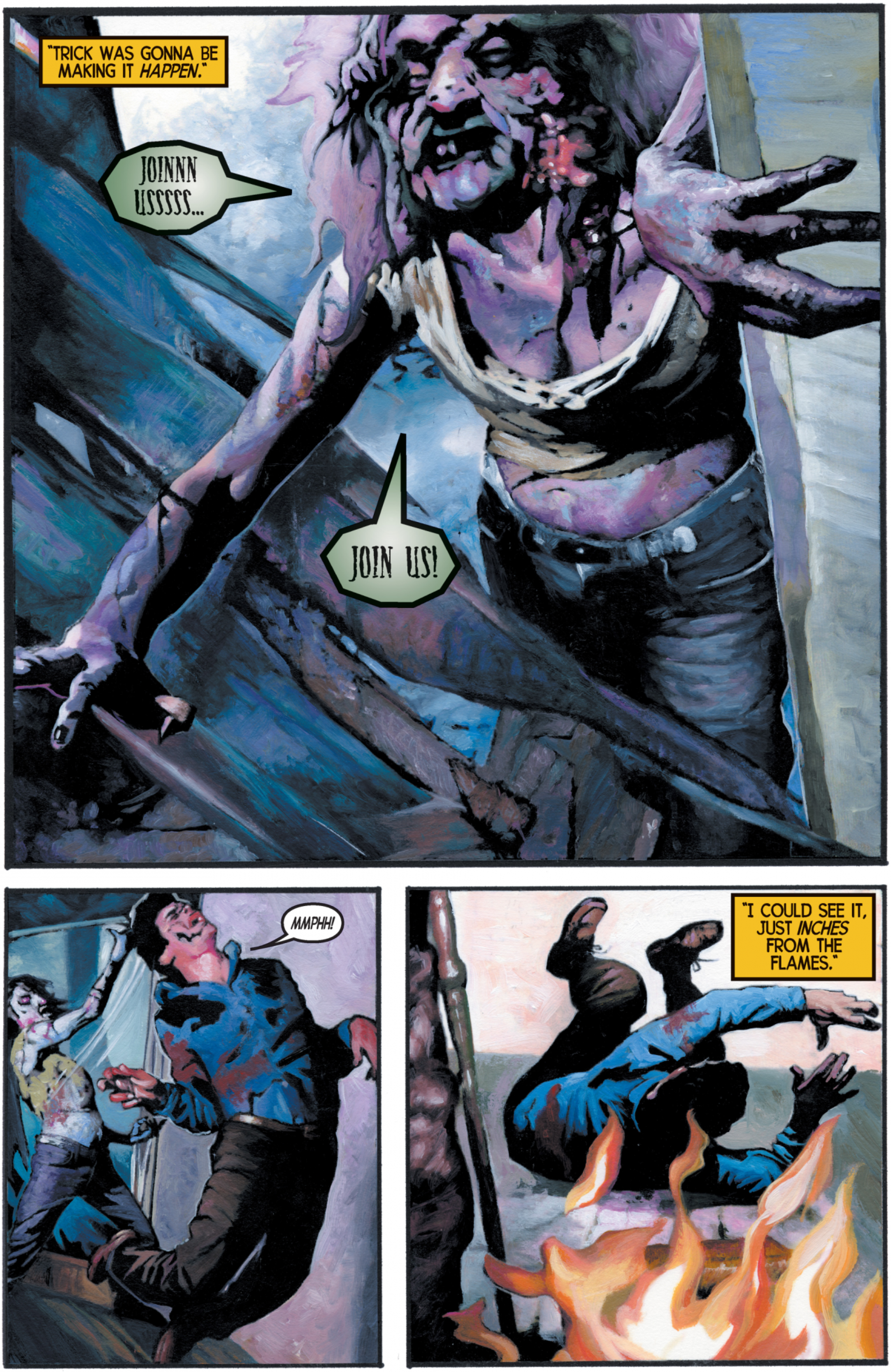

"BUT I SAW THROUGH THEIR LITTLE GAME. THEY WERE TRYING TO *PSYCH ME OUT.*
"ALL I HAD TO DO WAS KEEP MY *HEAD.*
"YOU KNOW. UNLIKE LINDA.
"WHY IN THE *HELL* DID I KEEP THAT DAMN NECKLACE?
"I STILL HAD THE RECEIPT. MAYBE IT WAS SO I COULD TAKE IT *BACK.*
"OR MAYBE...IT WAS BECAUSE I REALLY *LOVED* HER.
"AT LEAST THAT'S WHAT I TRIED TO *TELL* MYSELF..."
LINDA...

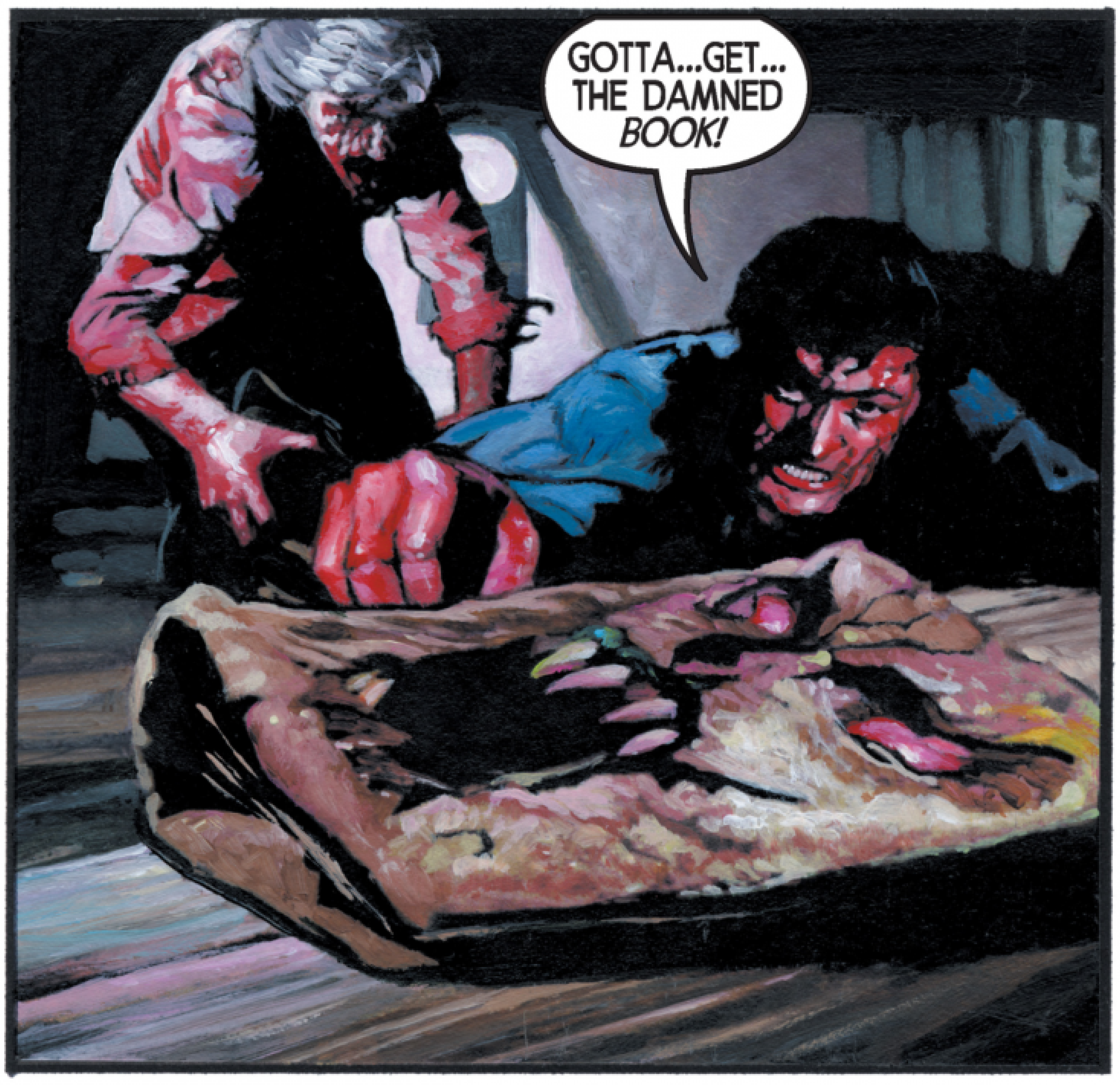

AGHHHH!!
EAGHHHH!!
JOIN US!
JOIN US!!!
"IT WAS CHERYL AGAIN. I *THINK*..."
NO!!
"NOT THAT MY DOUBLE-OUGHT-SIX *GAVE A DAMN*.

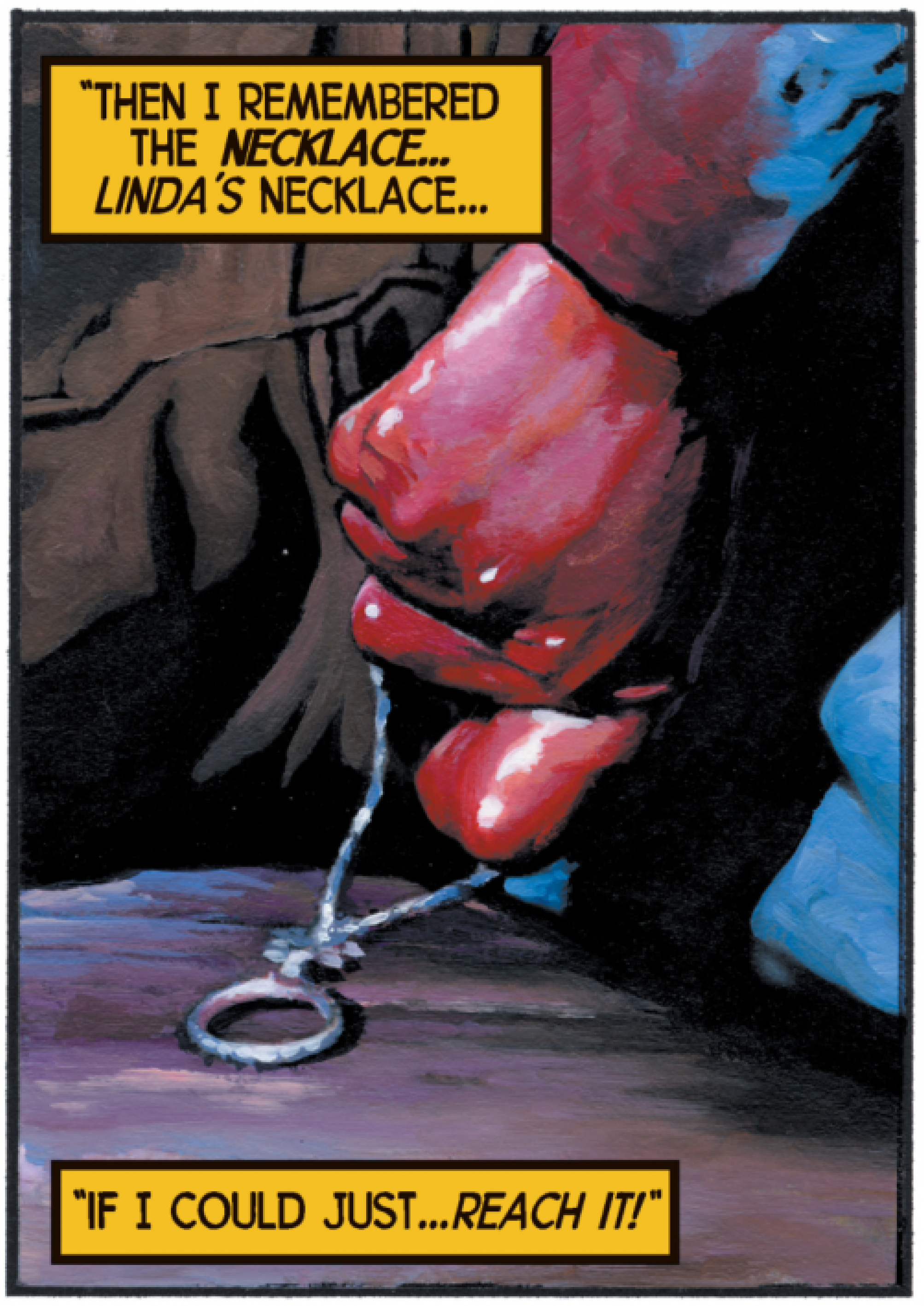

"I KNOW IT SOUNDS *CALLOUS,* BUT ALL I COULD THINK WAS..."
KPOOM!
GYAGHKK!
"...HOW MANY TIMES WAS I GONNA HAVE TO *SHOOT* THAT BITCH?!"
"WINDOW WAS *SHATTERED,* SO I'M NOT SURE WHAT I WAS THINKING WHEN I BLOCKED THE *FRONT DOOR.*
"ESPECIALLY SINCE MY OLD FRIEND *SCOTTY* WAS BUSY PLAYING *BATTERY BUNNY.*"

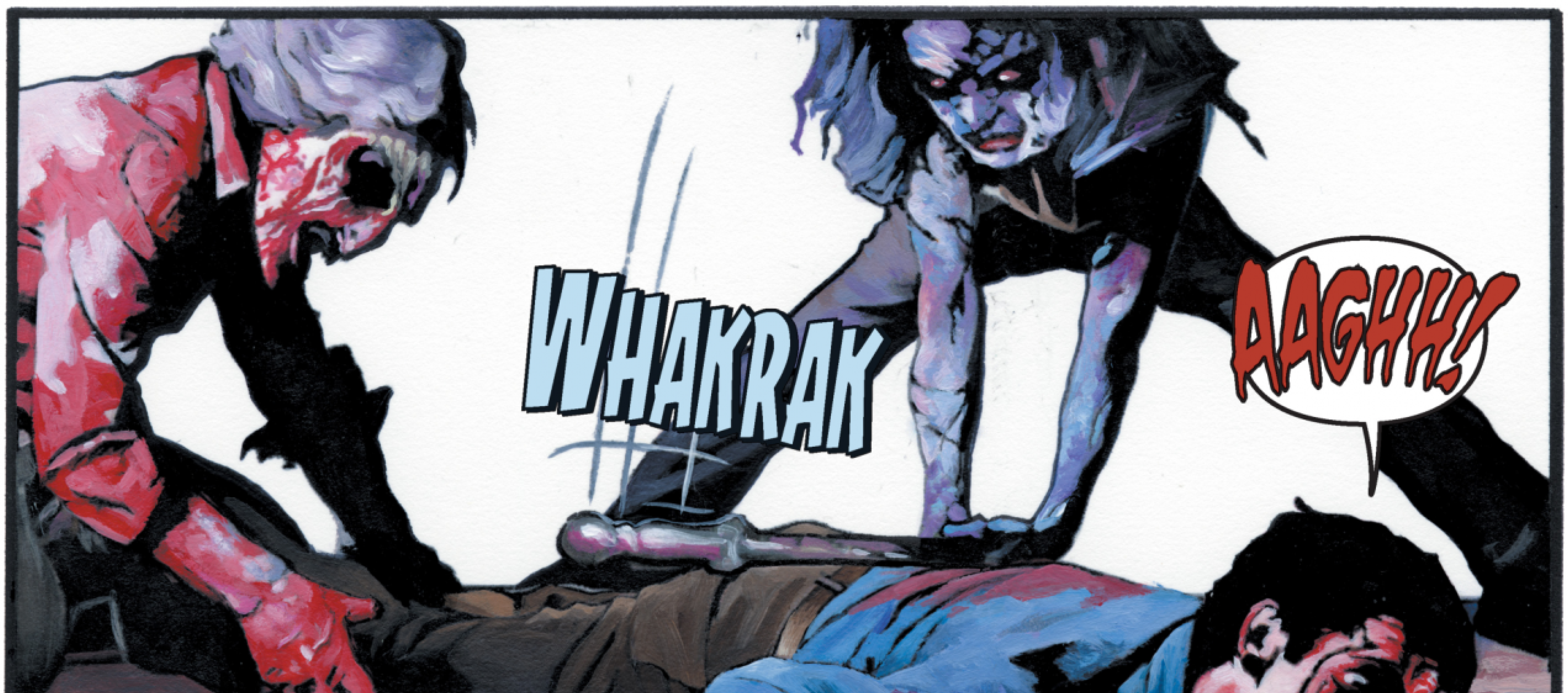

ERAGHHH!
"SON OF A BITCH KEPT *GOING* AND *GOING* AND *GOING*..."
WHMP
WHMP
"AND JUDGING FROM THE RACKET OUTSIDE, WHATEVER WAS LEFT OF CHERYL STILL WANTED A PIECE OF ME, TOO.
"TWO STEPS OVER, AND *IT* COULD'VE JUST *WALKED INSIDE.*
"BUT EVEN THOUGH THEY WERE *STUPID*, THESE DEMONS WERE *STRONG*."
KRAKK!
AHGGG... GGHH... GGHH...
THAPP
"AND I THINK SCOTTY WAS *PISSED.*"
HK! GHKK!

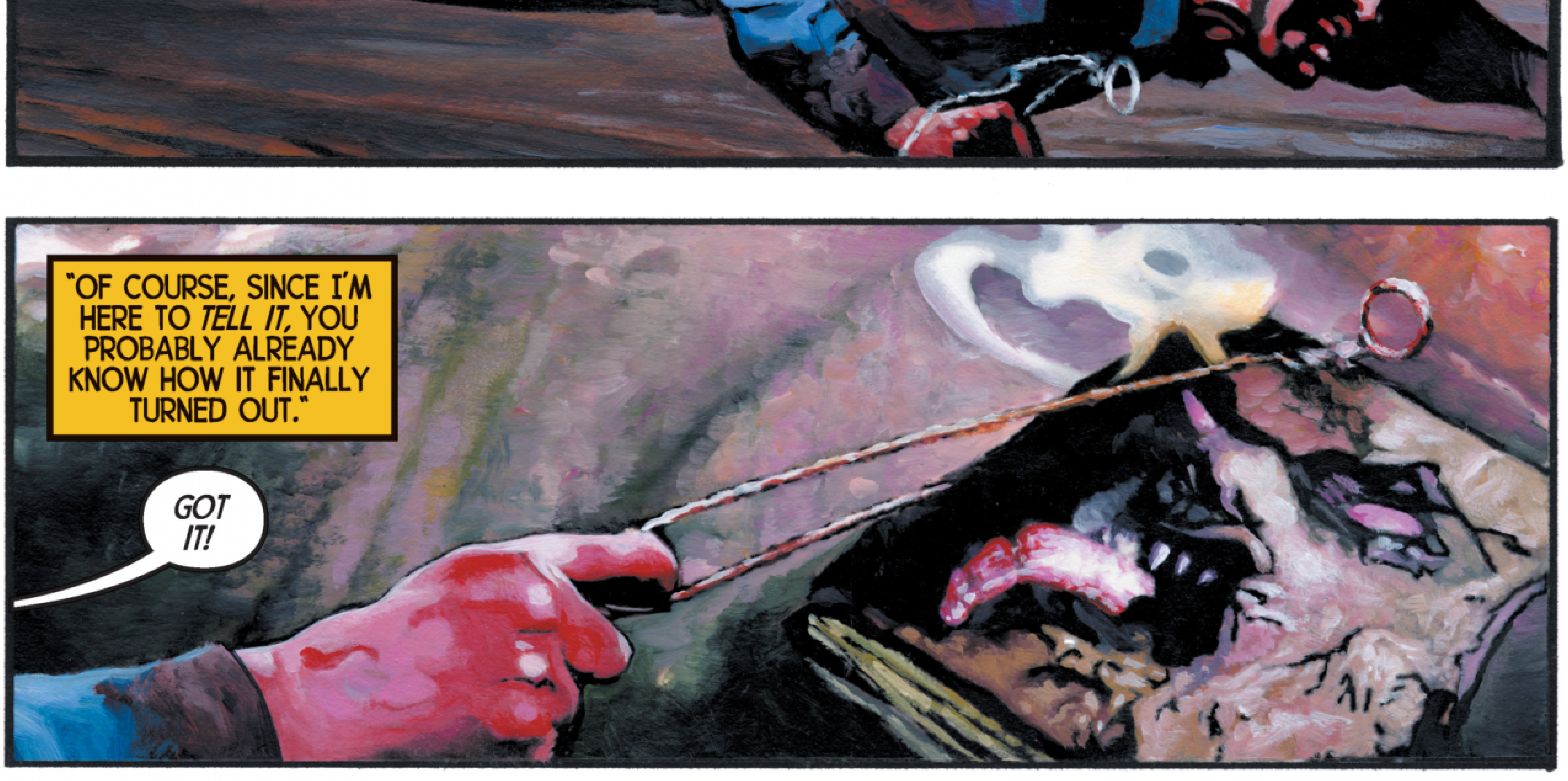

"FUNNY. I HEARD THAT THE *EYES* WERE WINDOWS INTO THE *SOUL.*
"IF THAT WERE TRUE, THEN I WAS STARING STRAIGHT INTO THE BOWELS OF *HELL.*
"AND *SCOTTY...*
"...I DIDN'T GIVE A DAMN *WHAT* HE WAS SEEING ANYMORE."
AGGHHHHH!!
"I WAS GOING THROUGH *FRIENDS* FASTER THAN A MASERATI IN A *SCHOOL ZONE...*
"...AND THERE DIDN'T SEEM TO BE ANY *END* IN SIGHT.
"THAT'S WHEN I NOTICED THAT WHATEVER WAS LEFT OF *SCOTTY* WAS SENDING UP *SMOKE SIGNALS.*
"TWO PLUS TWO SUDDENLY EQUALLED *FOUR.* BURN THE BOOK, BURN THE *DEMONS.*

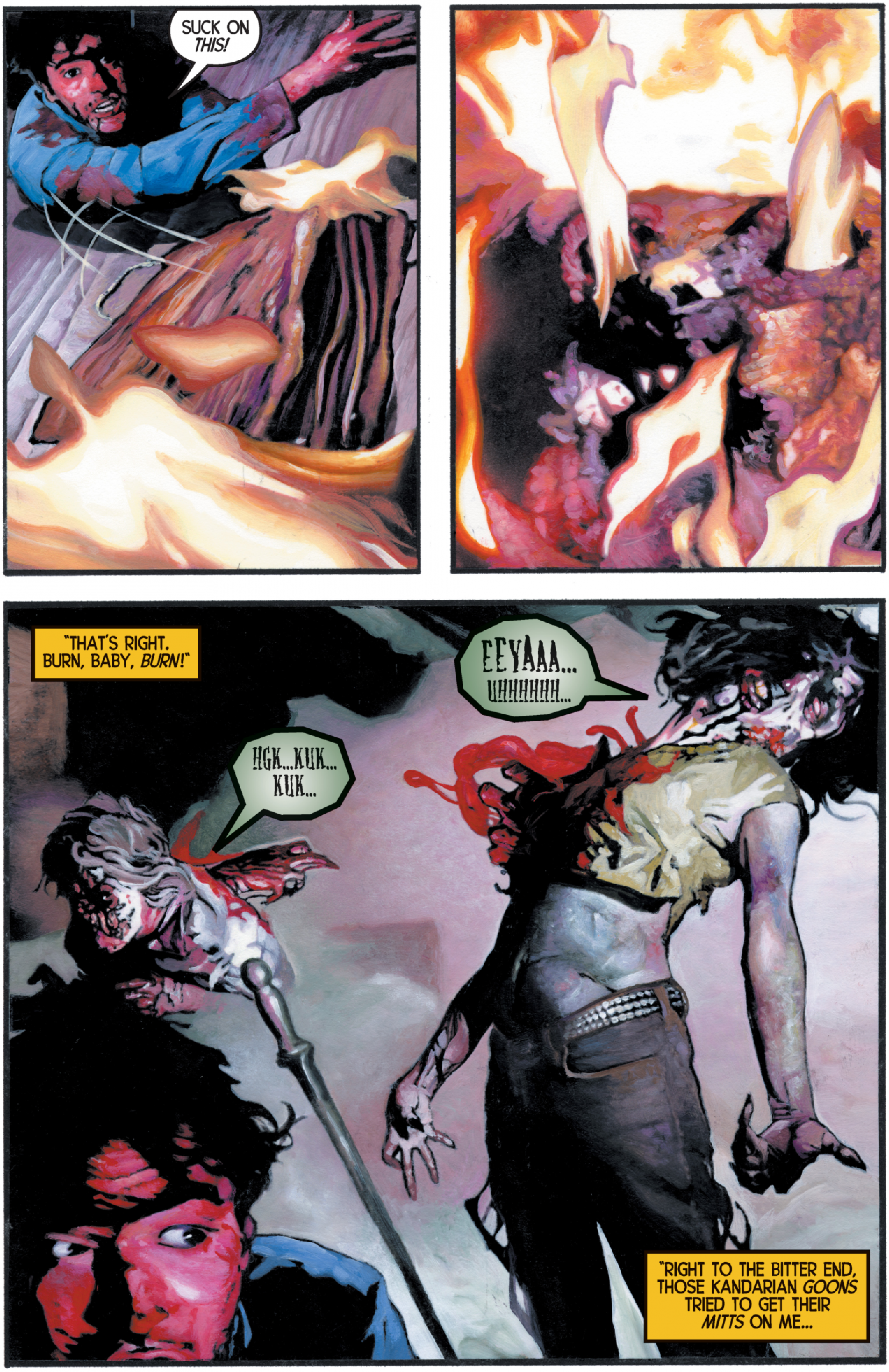

"TRICK WAS GONNA BE MAKING IT *HAPPEN*."
JOINNN USSSSS...
JOIN US!
MMPHH!
"I COULD SEE IT, JUST *INCHES* FROM THE FLAMES."

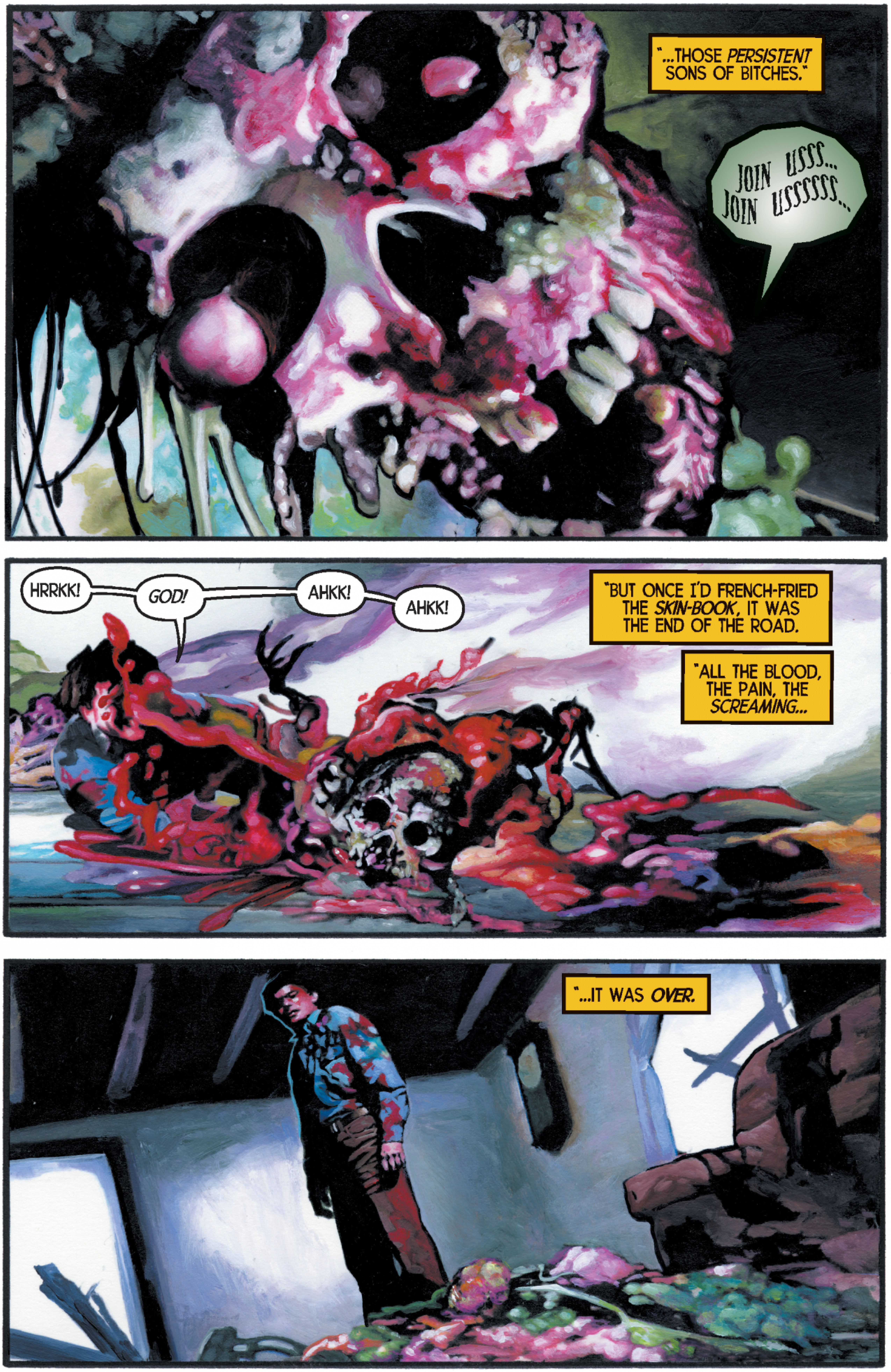

GOTTA...GET... THE DAMNED *BOOK!*

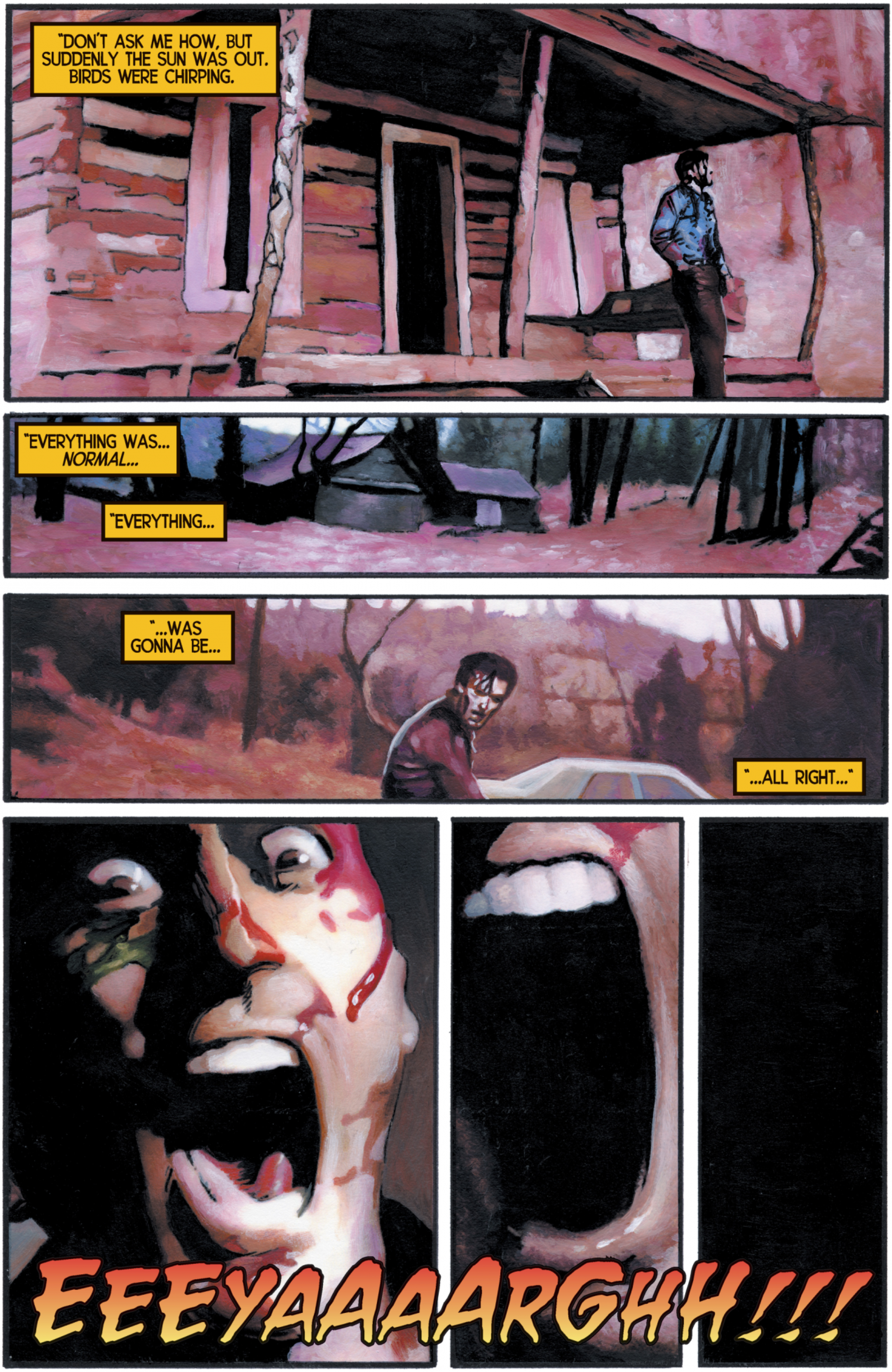

"THEN I REMEMBERED THE *NECKLACE...* *LINDA'S* NECKLACE...
"IF I COULD JUST...*REACH IT!*"

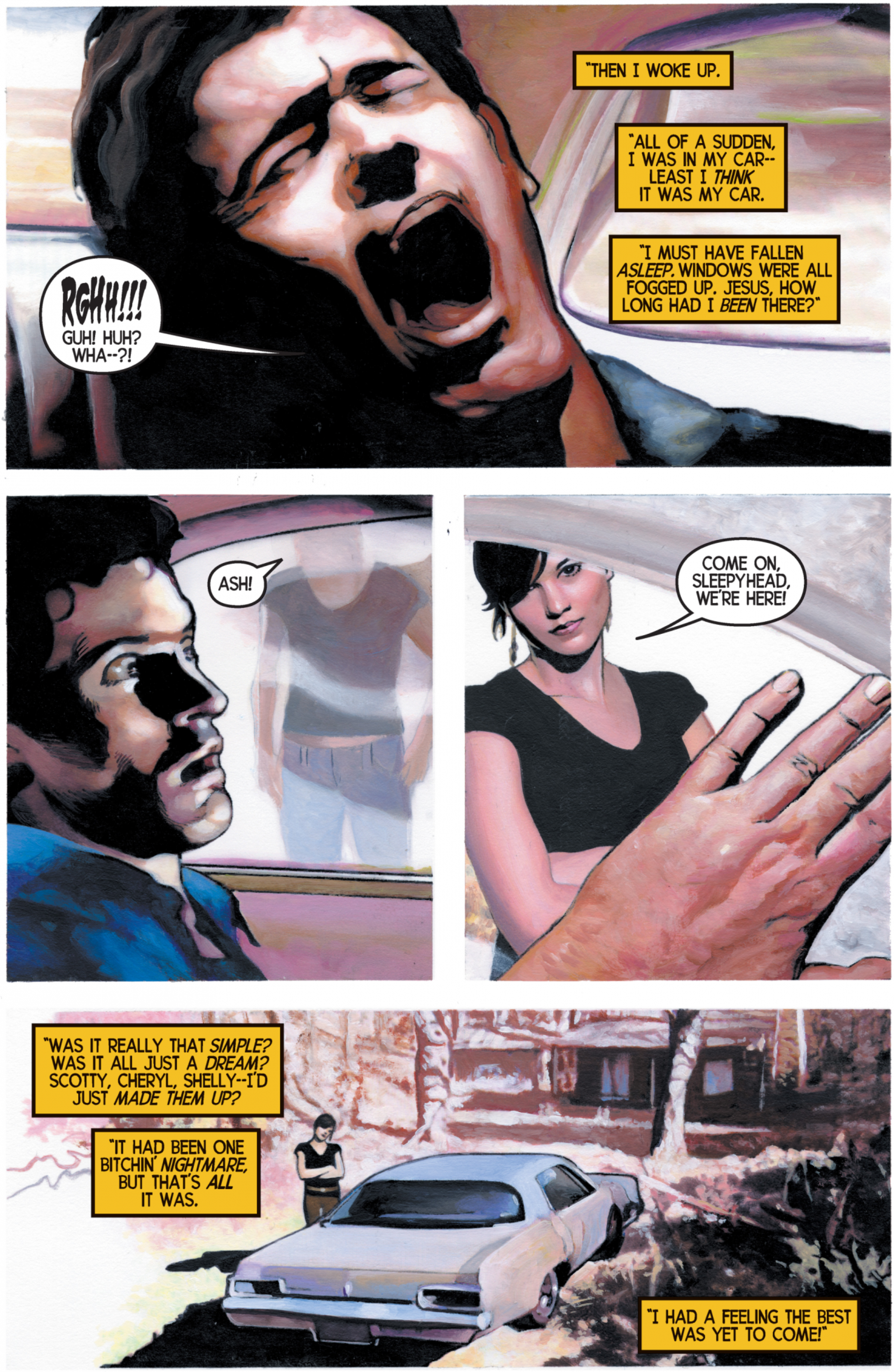

WHAKRAK
AAGHH!


"OF COURSE, SINCE I'M HERE TO *TELL IT,* YOU PROBABLY ALREADY KNOW HOW IT FINALLY TURNED OUT."
GOT IT!


SUCK ON *THIS!*
"THAT'S RIGHT. BURN, BABY, *BURN!*"
EEYAAA... UHHHHHH...
HGK...KUK... KUK...
"RIGHT TO THE BITTER END, THOSE KANDARIAN *GOONS* TRIED TO GET THEIR *MITTS* ON ME...


"...THOSE *PERSISTENT* SONS OF BITCHES."
JOIN USSS... JOIN USSSSSS...
HRRKK!
GOD!
AHKK!
AHKK!
"BUT ONCE I'D FRENCH-FRIED THE *SKIN-BOOK*, IT WAS THE END OF THE ROAD.
"ALL THE BLOOD, THE PAIN, THE *SCREAMING*...
"...IT WAS *OVER*.


"DON'T ASK ME HOW, BUT SUDDENLY THE SUN WAS OUT. BIRDS WERE CHIRPING.
"EVERYTHING WAS... *NORMAL*...
"EVERYTHING...
"...WAS GONNA BE...
"...ALL RIGHT..."
EEEYAAAARGHH!!!


"THEN I WOKE UP.
"ALL OF A SUDDEN, I WAS IN MY CAR-- LEAST I *THINK* IT WAS MY CAR.
"I MUST HAVE FALLEN *ASLEEP.* WINDOWS WERE ALL FOGGED UP. JESUS, HOW LONG HAD I *BEEN* THERE?"
RGHH!!! GUH! HUH? WHA--?!
ASH!
COME ON, SLEEPYHEAD, WE'RE HERE!
"WAS IT REALLY THAT *SIMPLE?* WAS IT ALL JUST A *DREAM?* SCOTTY, CHERYL, SHELLY--I'D JUST *MADE THEM UP?*
"IT HAD BEEN ONE BITCHIN' *NIGHTMARE,* BUT THAT'S *ALL* IT WAS.
"I HAD A FEELING THE BEST WAS YET TO COME!"

AFTERWORD

Welcome to this new edition of *Evil Dead*, the adaptation. My afterword to the 2008 paperback compilation opened with this simple question: "So what the hell *is it* about the *Evil Dead* trilogy?" Seems that the question still holds, all these years later, only more so. Since this four-issue series was released, the world has been besieged by Ash and the nasty Deadites. There have been dozens of comic-book spin-offs, video games, 2013's fresh movie take on the *Evil Dead* mythos . . . and on top of it all, the world was assaulted with thirty glorious episodes of the *Ash vs Evil Dead* series, which brought Bruce Campbell back to his signature role of Ash for, he claims, the last time.

By mysterious fate, I found myself thrust into the realm of the undead when I came on board as executive producer and writer for *Ash vs Evil Dead* Season Three. After meeting with executive producers Rob Tapert and Bruce Campbell and getting the thumbs up from Sam Raimi and the fine folks at STARZ, I was catapulted into *Evil Dead* land—AKA some enormous sound stages in Auckland, New Zealand. It was there we introduced Ashley's previously unknown daughter Brandy Barr (daughter of, yes, Candy), sprayed copious amounts of blood, and finally sent Ashley off into the future for adventures unknown.

If anyone out there believes dreams can't possibly come true, I hook a thumb in my direction and say, "Uhh, sometimes they do!" Of course, twenty-five years of writing and producing television helped me land the job, but sliding into the *Evil Dead* universe was like putting on a familiar old shoe. After four decades of nursing this Evil Dead/Ash obsession, I was actually being paid to put words into in Ash's smart-ass mouth, while simultaneously scratching item number one off my professional bucket list.

Of course, the book you're reading was my first shot at creating Ash-speak.

When Dark Horse asked me if I'd be interested in adapting the original film for comics, I have to admit I had my doubts. The movie is the movie, available on cable, streaming, lots of Blu-rays, and of course buried deep in many fan's brains. You mess with a masterpiece at your peril, and, like Ash, I've learned that when trouble looms, it's best to run first and ask questions later.

But three things encouraged me to leap into the fray. First, okay, it's *Evil Dead*. Don't be an idiot, Mark. Second, it was a chance to explore the characters and expand on a few plot points that seemed to have been left dangling. Where did the kids in the car come from? What happened to Scotty when he left the cabin, then reappeared a bloody mess? And what was Ashley *really* thinking when he was being mauled by his Deadite girlfriend?

But the kicker was discovering that Dark Horse had convinced the incredible John Bolton to paint the damn thing. I hope I am permitted to gush, because as far as I'm concerned, John painted the best damn Deadites ever committed to the printed page. His work is stellar throughout and makes this *Evil Dead* entry something that can truly stand on its own.

After a while the book went out of print, and collectors' copies of the first paperback compilation were scarce and often expensive. So I couldn't be more pleased to see this new hardcover edition land on the bookshelves—both so John's incredible art can be savored once more (and possibly for the first time by fans who've joined Ash-world since 2008), but also to bookend my own involvement in the *Evil Dead* world.

So enjoy this sojourn to that crazy little cabin in the woods, and here's to the Deadites yet to come . . .

—Mark Verheiden
March 2021

THE EVIL DEAD 2008 EDITION

AFTERWORD

(Because Why the Kandarian Hell Not?)

So what the hell *is it* about the *Evil Dead* trilogy? All three movies were relatively unsuccessful (commercially) when originally released back in the '80s and '90s. And yet with the passage of time, they have spawned a mini-empire of DVDs, comic books, and even an off-Broadway musical! Aside from the ancillary benefits, they essentially launched the storied careers of filmmakers Sam Raimi and Rob Tapert, as well as master thespian Bruce Campbell. So what's the deal?

I think you have to go back to the late '70s/early '80s to really understand how the first film was a breath of fresh air. (Fresh gore?) The success of the excellent *Halloween* and the not-so-excellent *Friday the 13th* had led to a plethora of cheap, mostly creatively bankrupt slasher movies. Killers in hoods, masks, and asbestos suits used knives, shears, and flamethrowers to murder youthful victims in bloody sprees mostly designed to show off the makeup guy's chops. "Style" is harder to achieve than spurting arteries, and suddenly the horror genre was getting, of all things, boring.

The Evil Dead changed that. Say what you will about the first movie's production values—I'm not blind, we're not talking *Titanic* here!—there is a filmmaker's mind behind the shots and the story, and an actor's intuition behind the performances, especially poor befuddled Ashley. Yes, it's a movie about Kandarian demons and kids trapped in a tiny cabin (that seems to expand in size whenever necessary). And yes, it's got plenty of gore—the pencil in the ankle is still wince-producing. But there's a crazy sense of "anything goes" joy in the madness that really makes the first movie stand out. The sequel, *Evil Dead 2: Dead by Dawn*, took everything a step further and remains, seriously, one of the great, seminal movies of the 1980s. It's a glorious reinvention of the horror genre with a pitch-perfect performance from the inimitable Bruce Campbell. Plus, a chainsaw! And *Army of Darkness* is simply loads of fun, with some of the best snappy/stupid lines from the "Ash" character ever. ("Gimme some sugar, baby.")

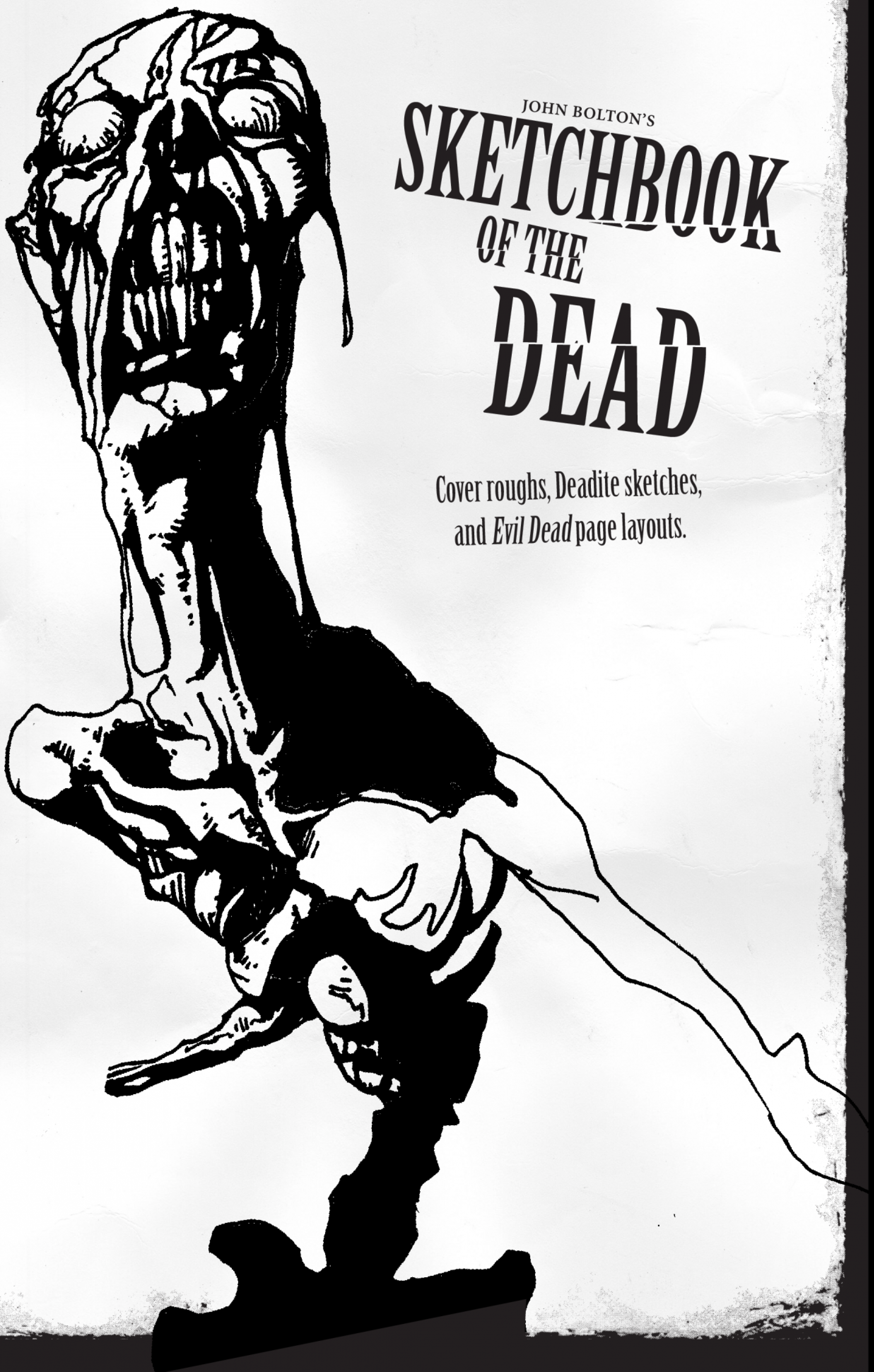
So the movies are great. What's any of this have to do with our comic-book adaptation/expansion of the first film? Just that, when I first embarked on scripting the comics, I set myself three goals. The first was simple, and yet probably the biggest challenge; as much as I love the first movie, doing a beat-by-beat comic-book rehash seemed pointless. You can find multiple DVD editions online for pennies, so viewers looking to enjoy the *Evil Dead* experience don't need me to provide a "memory book." I was determined to give the reader something *more* than the movie itself. So I peeked around the edges of the first film and found a few places where expansion actually seemed to make sense. Readers will have to decide if we were successful, but I'd like to think of this new material as "bonus scenes" for the devoted fan.

Goal number two? Don't screw it up. As much as I wanted to modestly expand and amplify on the events in the first film, I also didn't want to rejigger the story or lose the crazy, manic vibe that made *The Evil Dead* work in the first place.

Goal number three was out of my hands, but achieved the instant John Bolton agreed to paint the book. This puppy had to look *good*. Call me old school, but *The Evil Dead* needs to look like *The Evil Dead*. Not *Evil Dead*-ish or *Evil Dead*-esque or *Evil Dead* manga. Well, as the book in hand demonstrates, John came through big time. His work is horrific, moody, powerful, and just plain brilliant.

Finally, though, having a chance to contribute, in whatever small way, to the *Evil Dead* mythos makes me feel all Clint Eastwood inside, as in it "makes my day." Tracing through the myriad Kevin Bacon–style connections, the glory of *The Evil Dead* led me to pester Dark Horse publisher Mike Richardson into contacting Sam Raimi back in the day, which led to Sam and Rob Tapert eventually producing the movie *Timecop*, and all sorts of other fun stuff since. It's been a heck of a ride, and it all goes back to that little (or not so little) cabin in the woods . . .

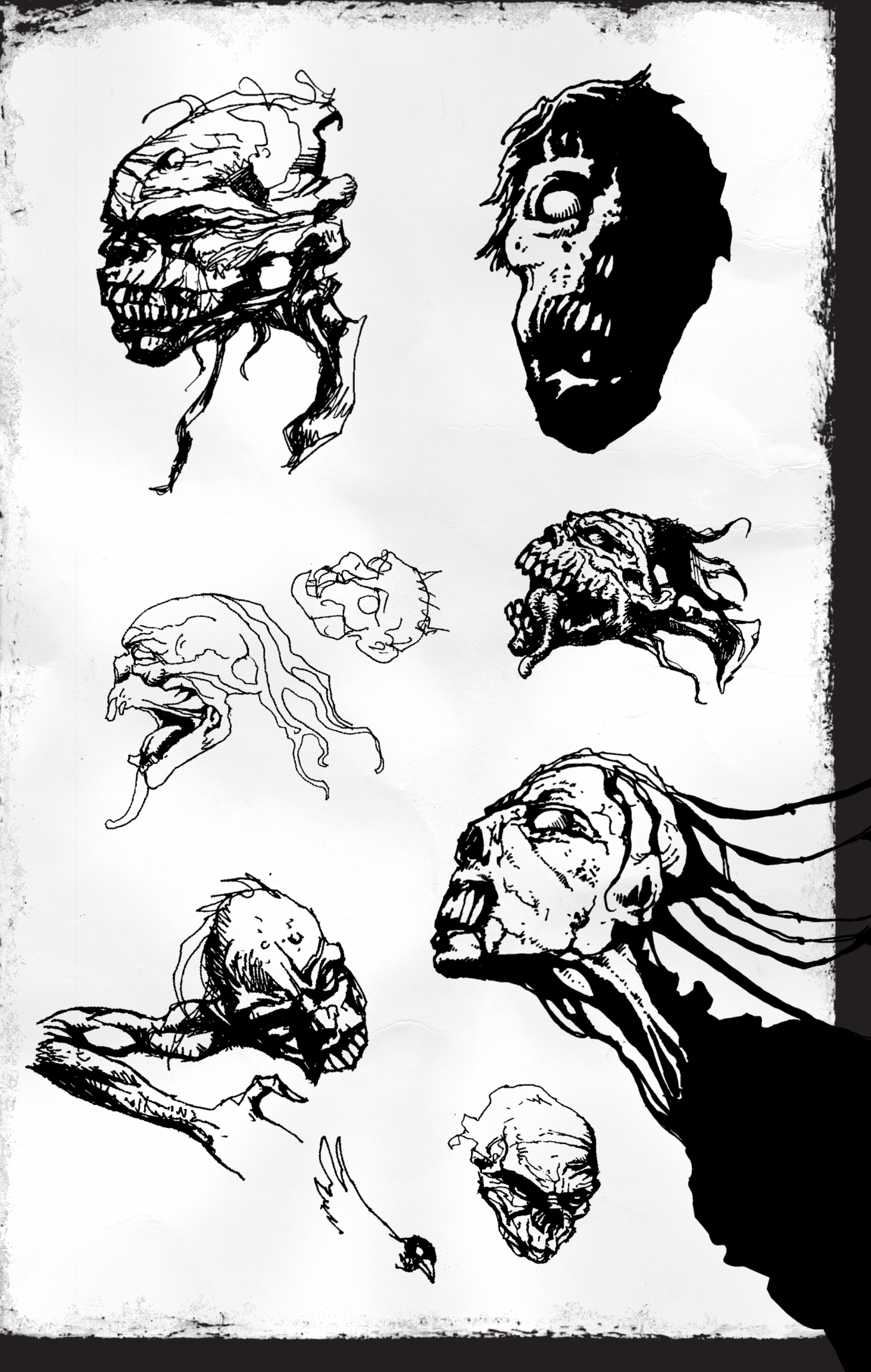
—Mark Verheiden
July 2008

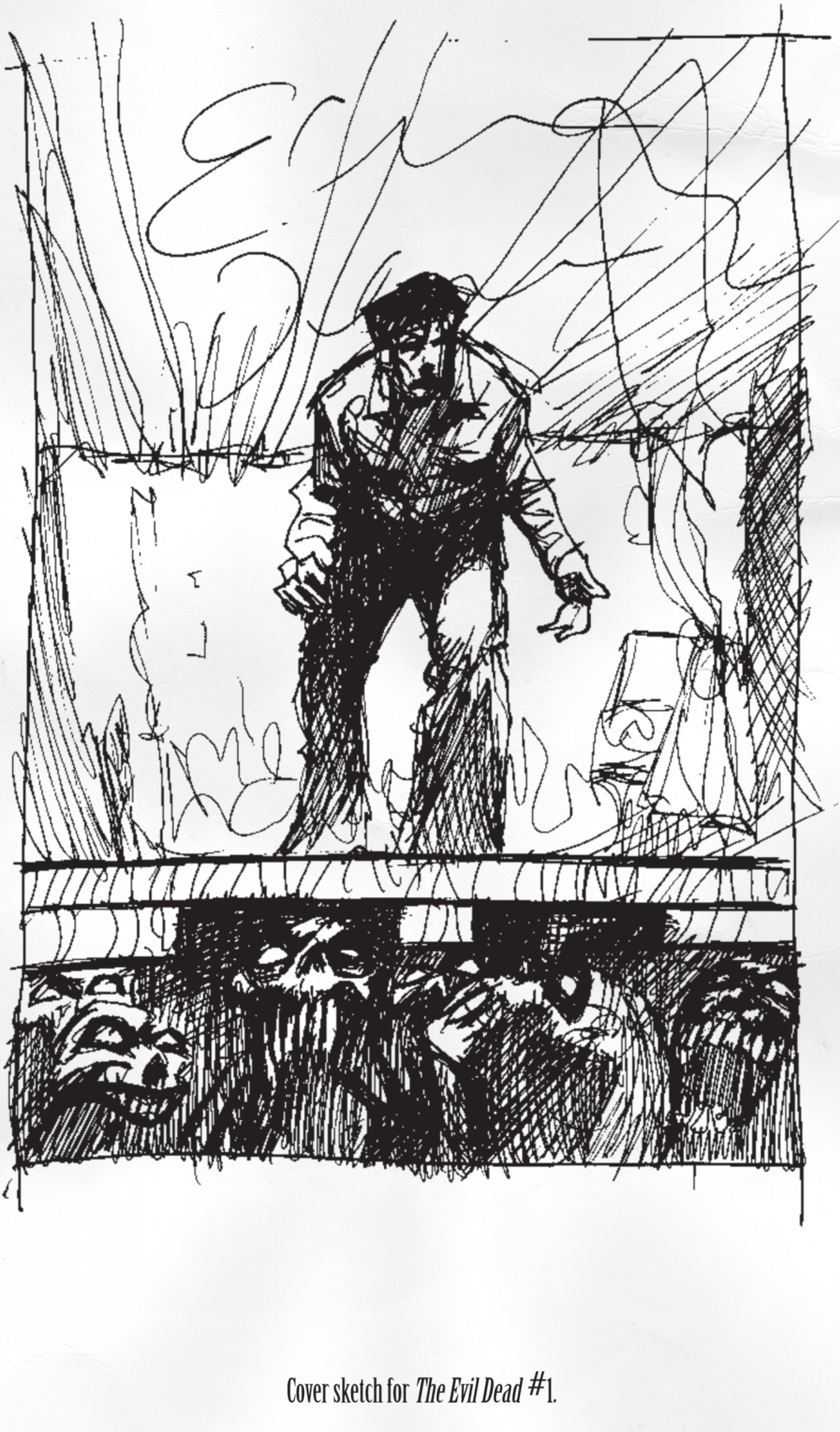


JOHN BOLTON'S

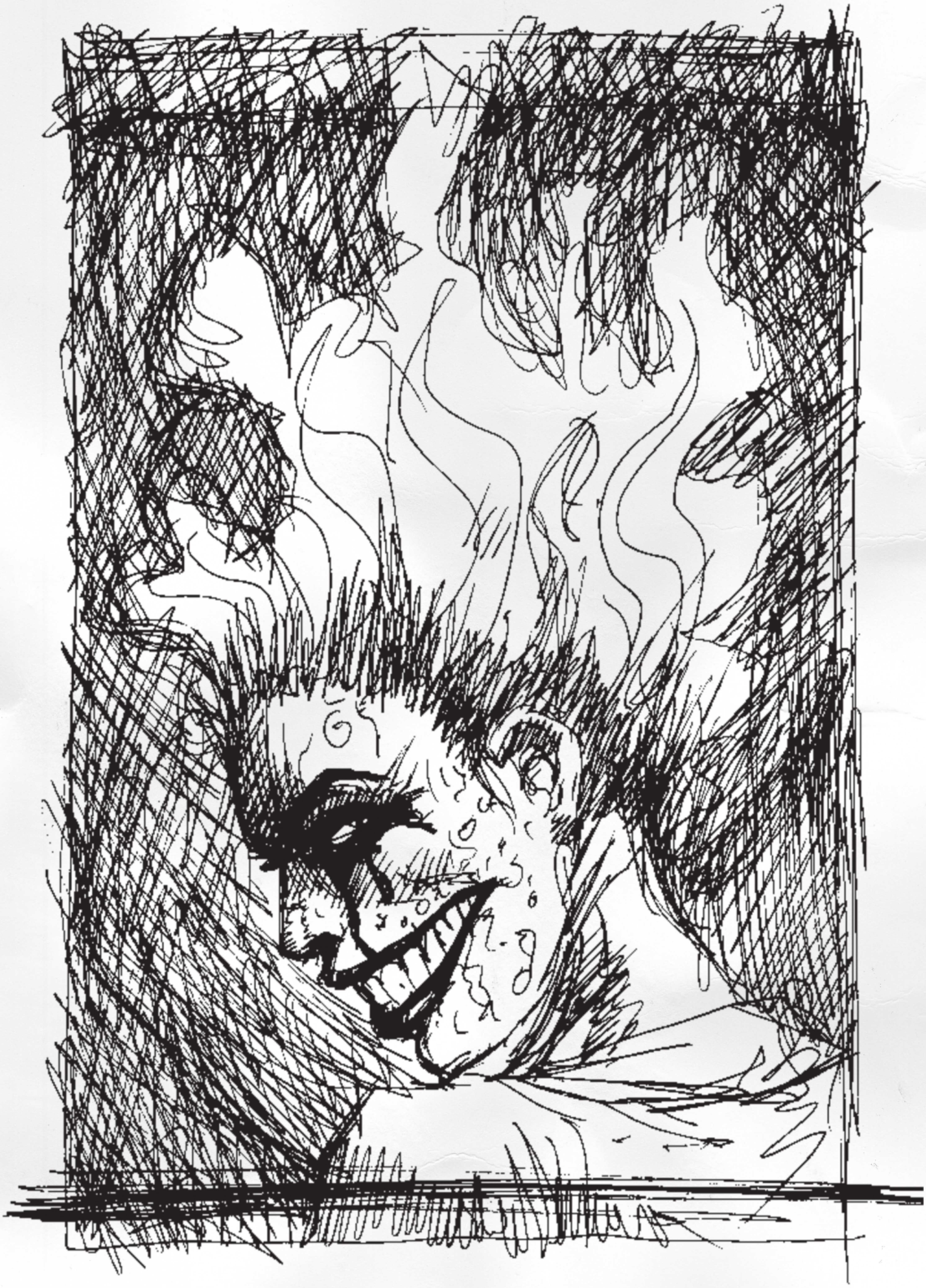
SKETCHBOOK OF THE DEAD

Cover roughs, Deadite sketches,
and *Evil Dead* page layouts.

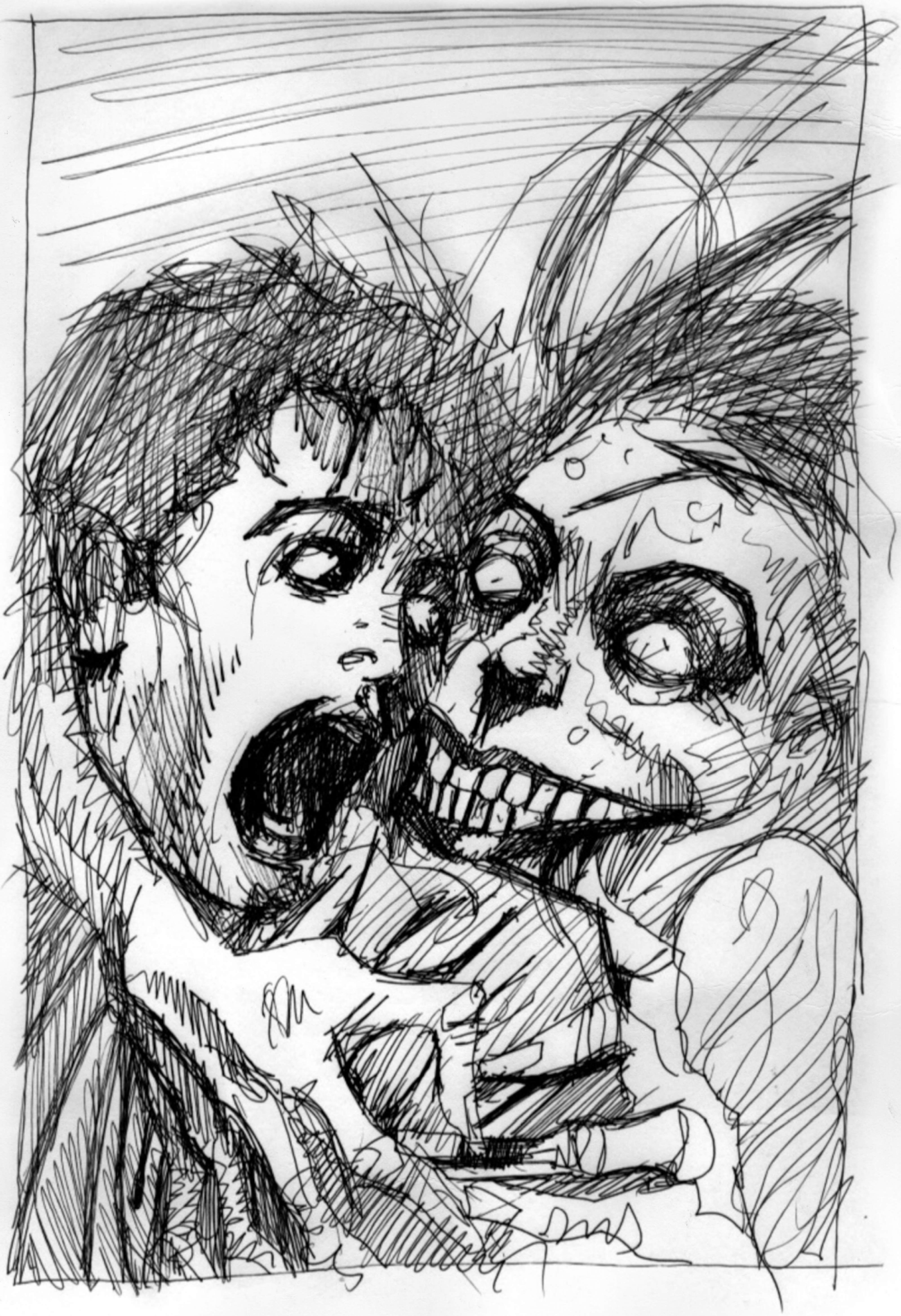




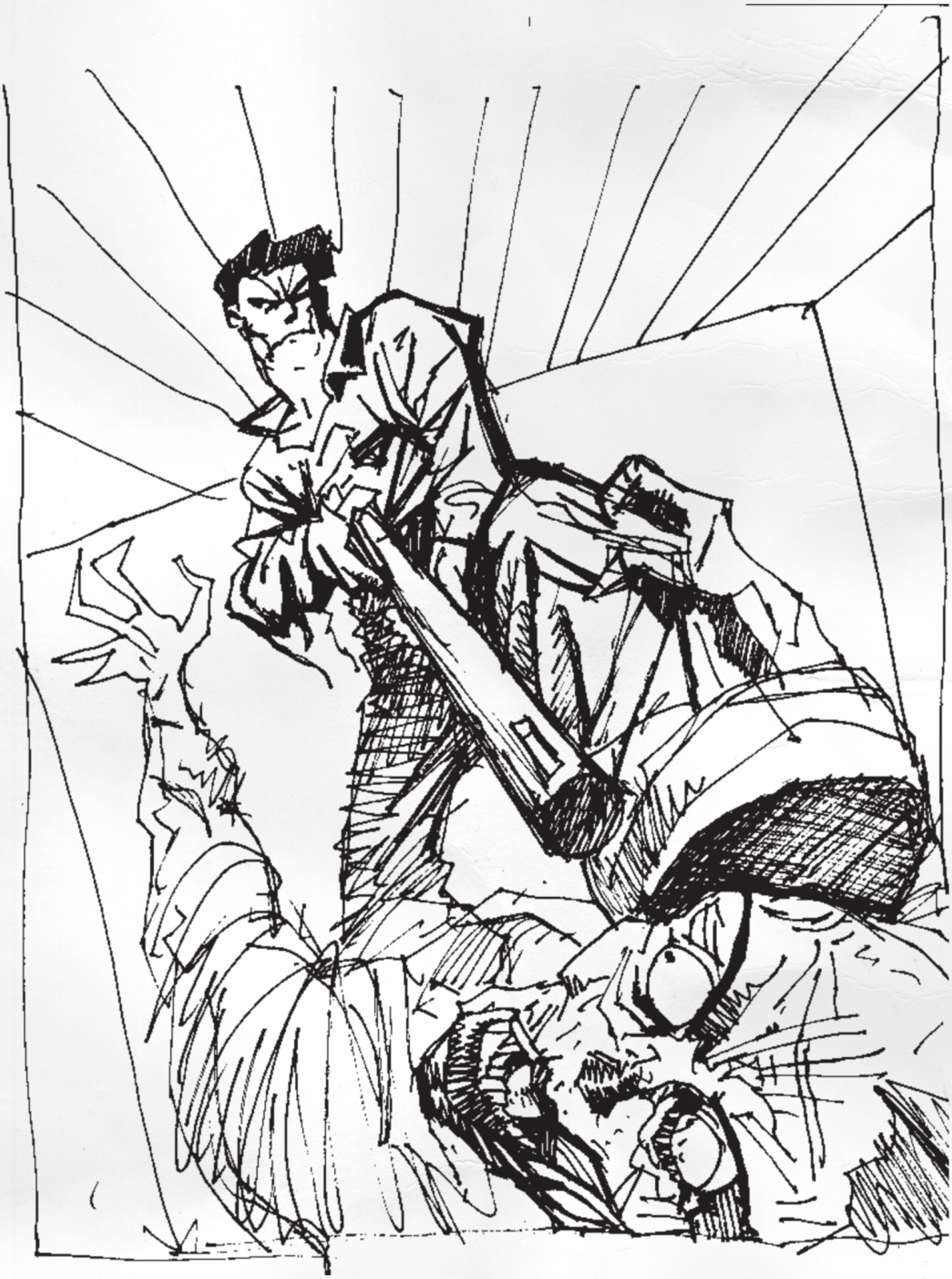
Cover sketch for *The Evil Dead* #1.



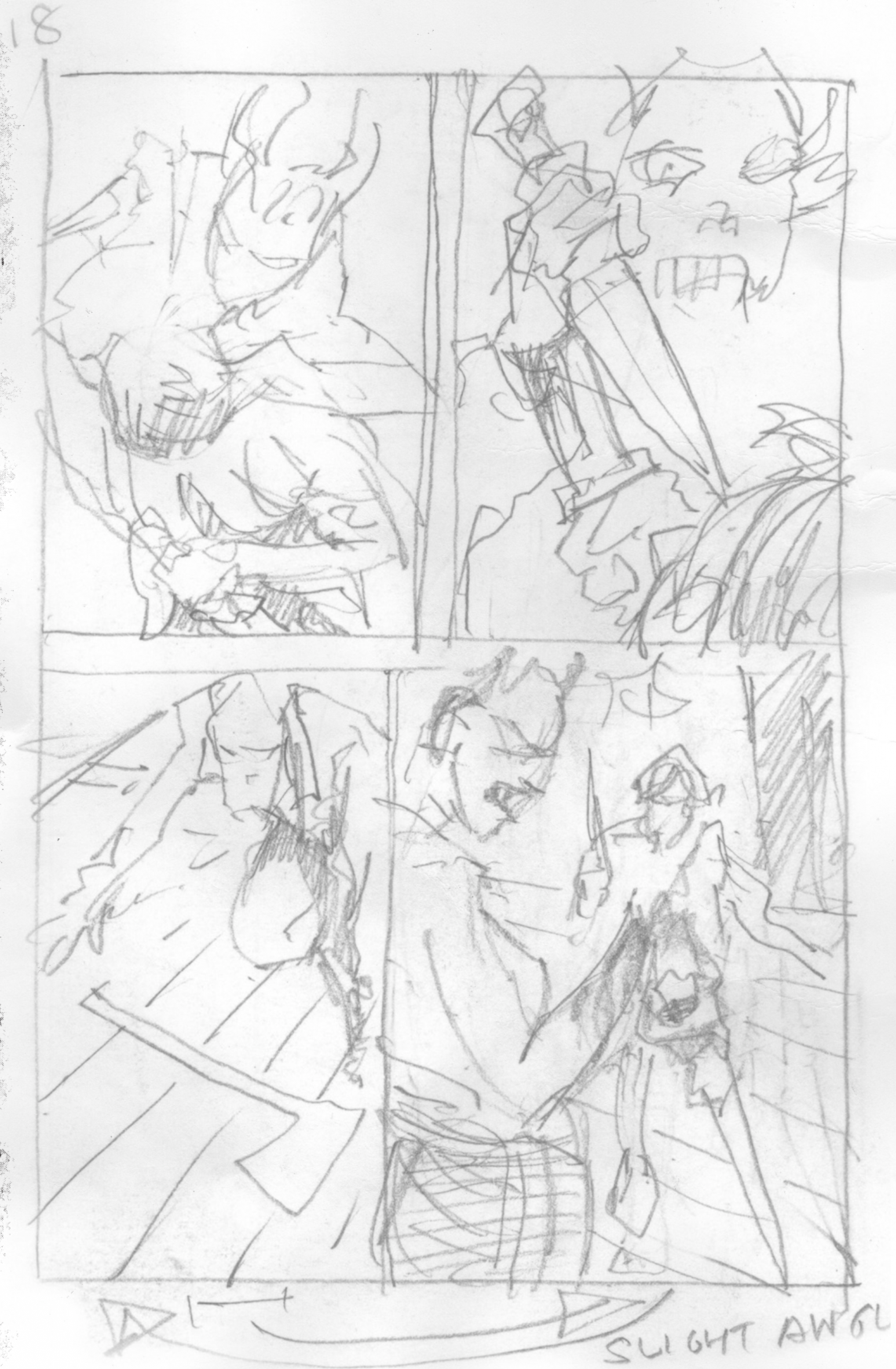
Cover sketch for *The Evil Dead* #2.



Cover sketch for *The Evil Dead* #3.



Cover sketch for *The Evil Dead* #4.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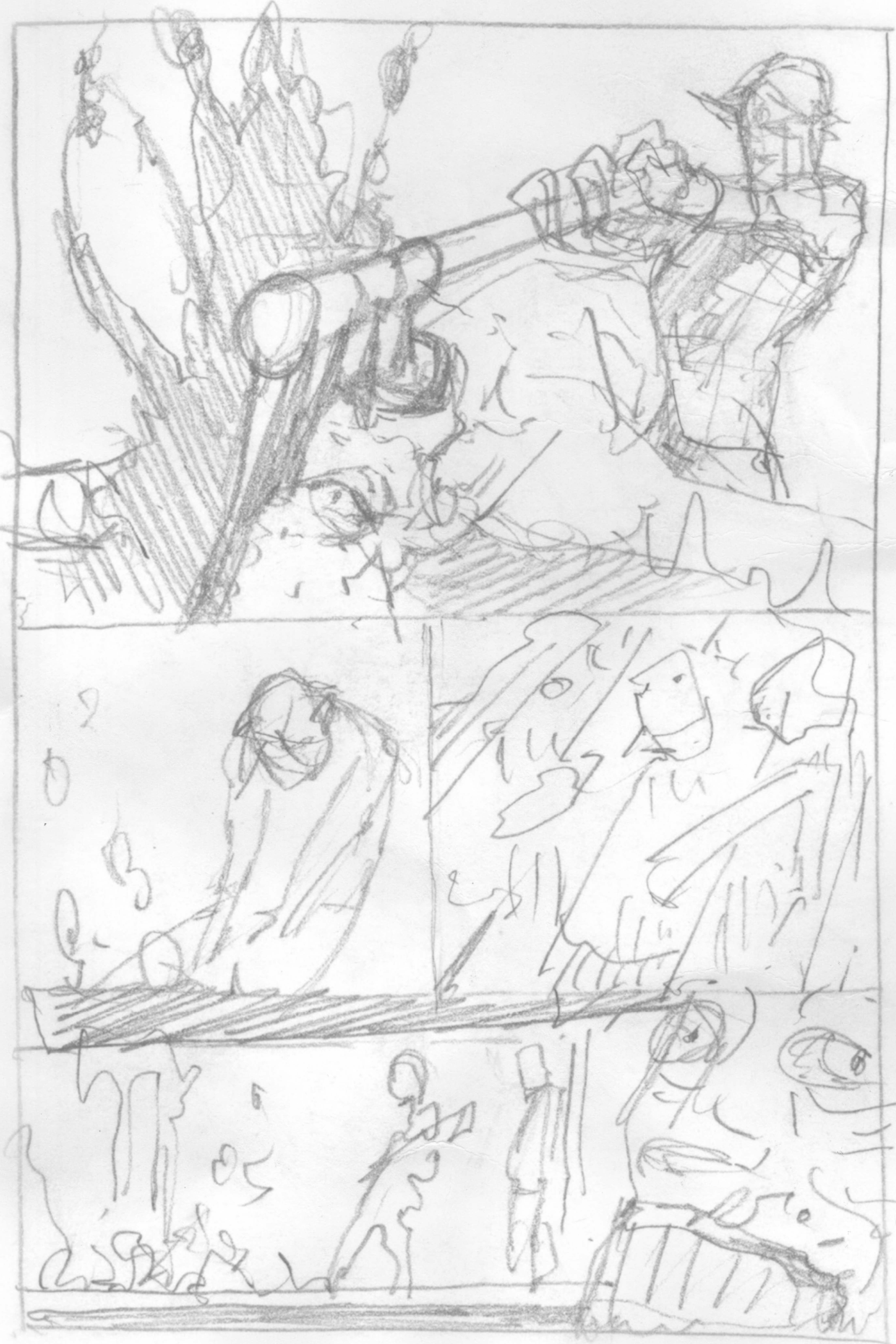
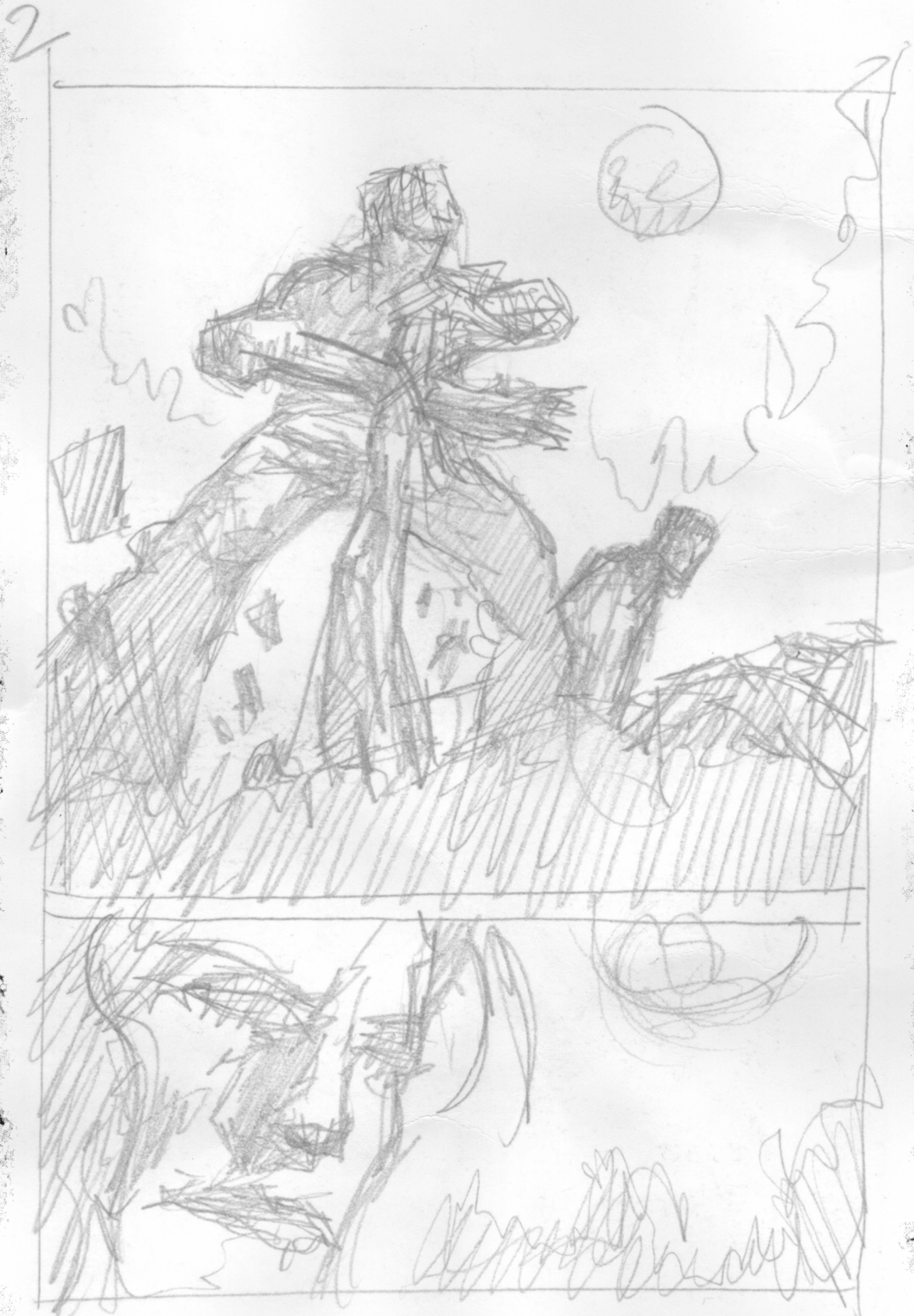
SLIGHT ANGL

Various page layouts from *The Evil Dead.*

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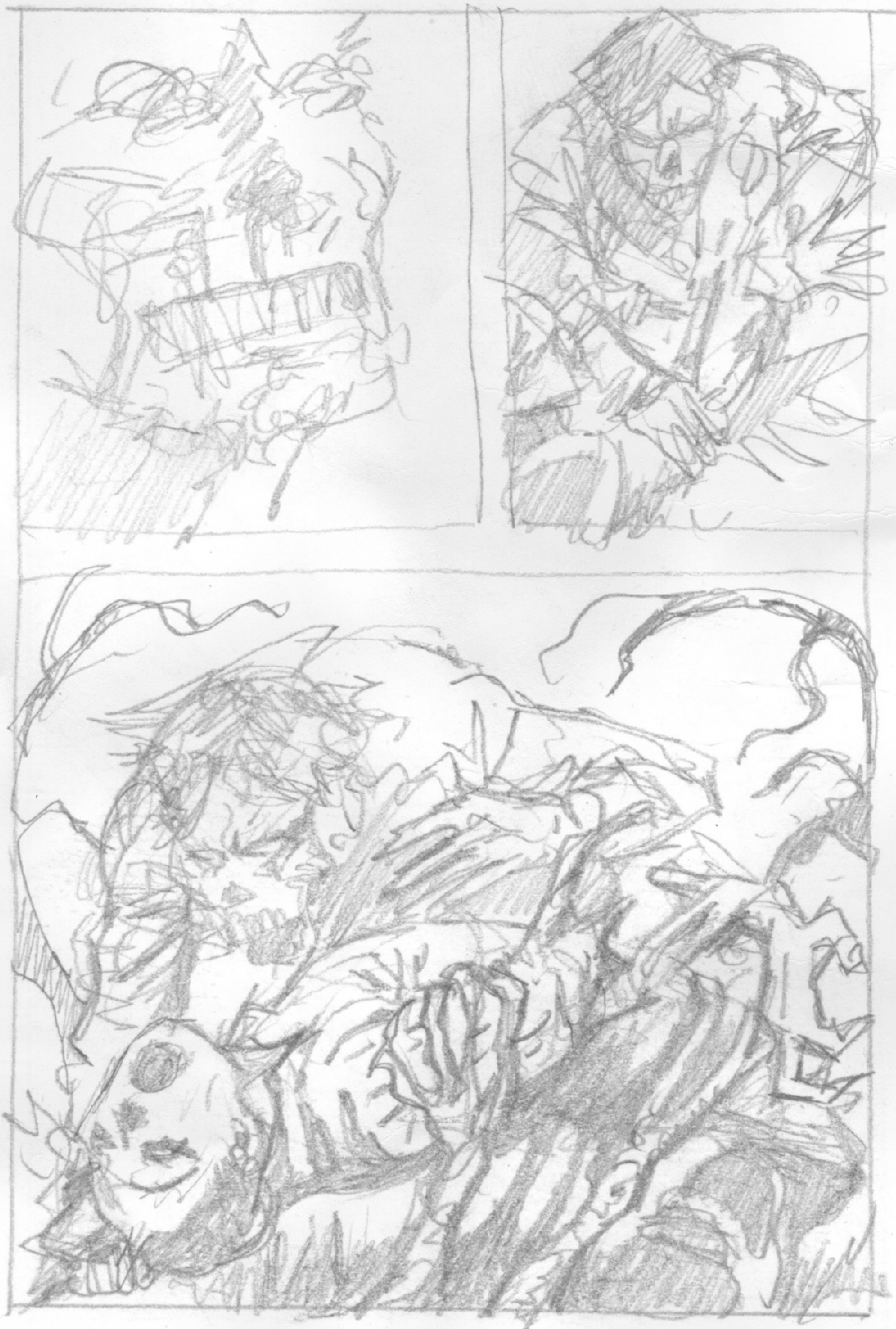

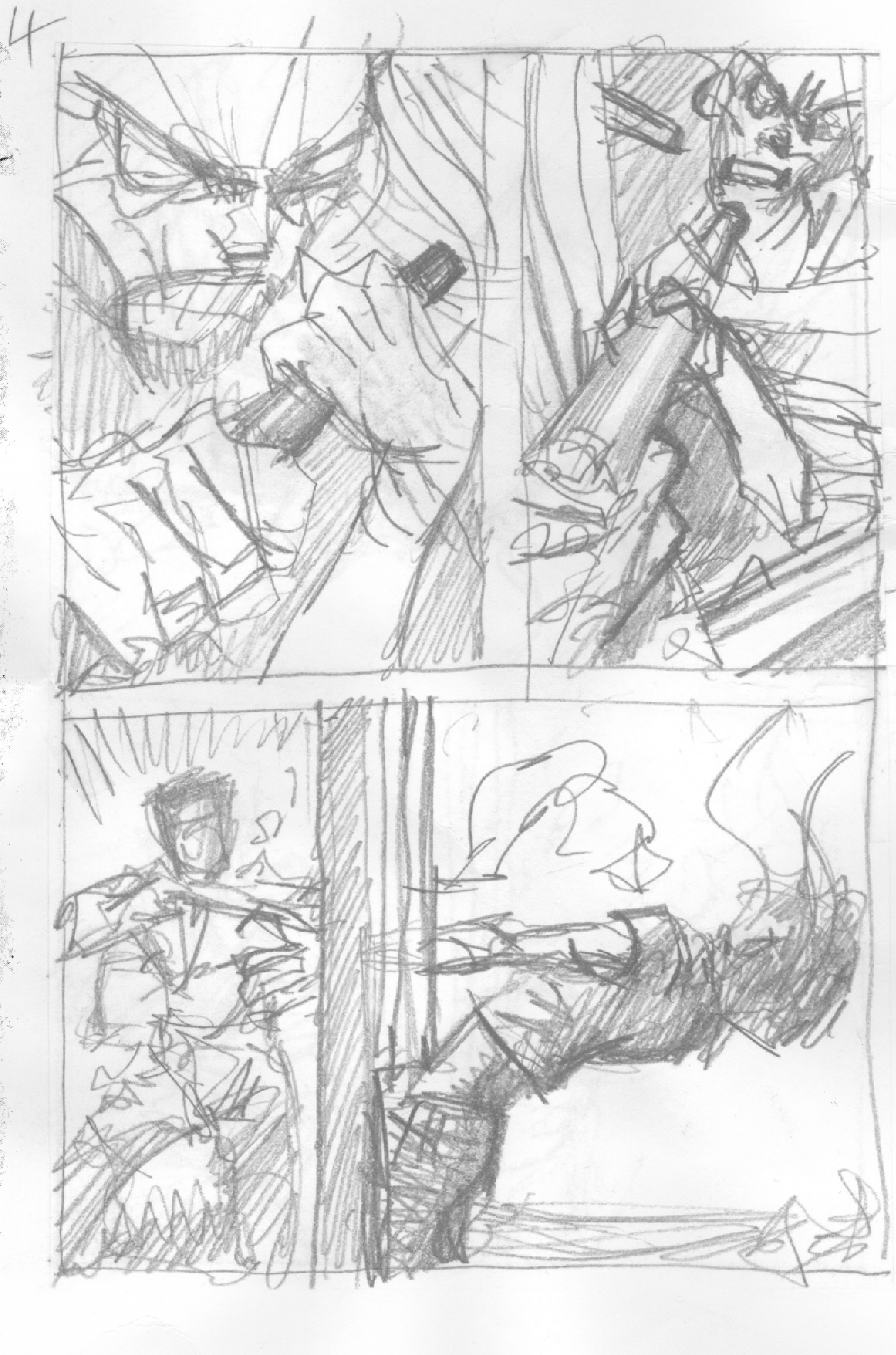
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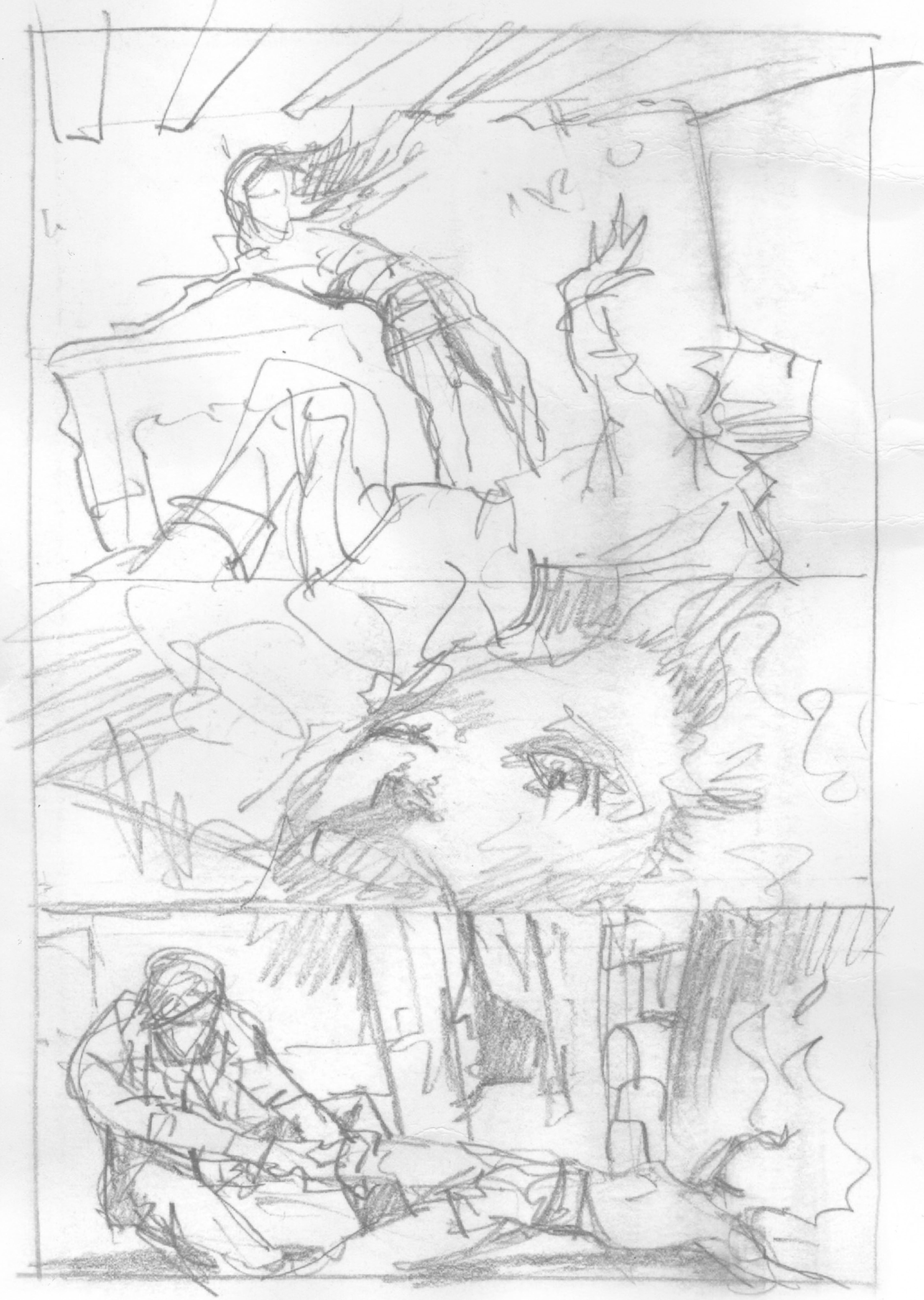

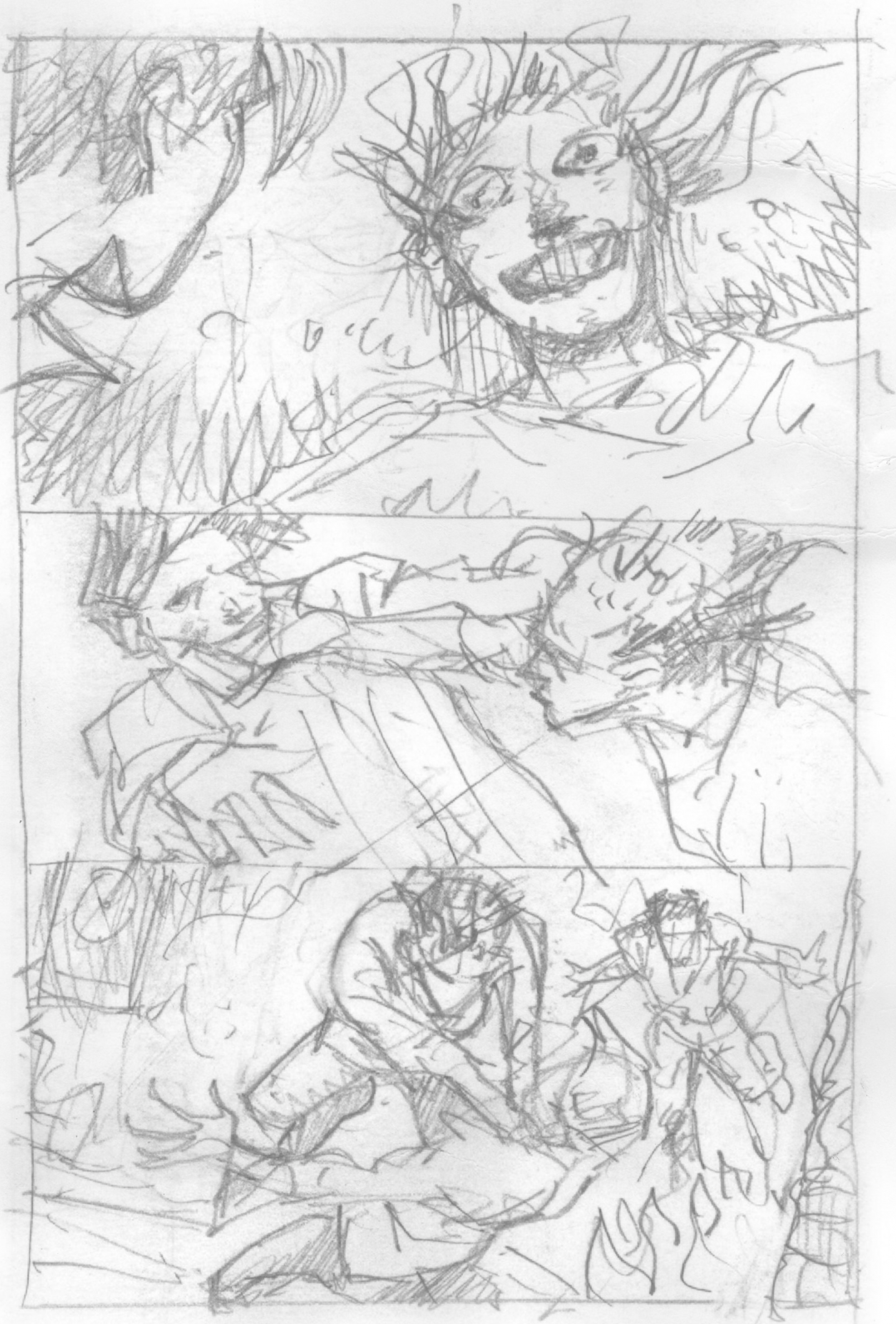

"Whatever the hell had crawled inside them . . .
Kandarian demon-scum or just a bad case of cat scratch fever . . .
I was gonna have to *play dirty* or die."
—Ash Williams

Celebrate the 40th anniversary of Sam Raimi's cult horror classic! Writer Mark Verheiden (*Ash vs Evil Dead*, *My Name Is Bruce*) and artist John Bolton (*God Save the Queen*, *Harlequin Valentine*) present an exciting expansion on the film that introduced us to the powerful Book of the Dead, the relentlessly violent Deadites, and Ash—one resilient, blood-soaked survivor. Now an iconic horror hero, relive Ash's first visit to the cabin that brought him face to face with the delectably deranged Deadites who possessed his girlfriend and friends . . . and turned "the perfect place to get laid" into a house of fear and fury. Return to the original nonstop gore-fest and experience the thrills, gags, and *gagging* anew, with unexpected extra scenes.

Collecting the Dark Horse Comics miniseries *The Evil Dead* #1-#4, this is the only officially authorized expansion of the classic horror film, with new afterword text by Mark Verheiden and a sketchbook section from artist John Bolton—the ultimate *illustrated* experience in grueling terror!

THE EVIL DEAD
40TH ANNIVERSARY

"With permission from Sam Raimi and Rob Tapert, we've expanded the movie, meeting our characters back in their pre-Deadite lives and opening up the story to see what happened between the events seen on screen."
—Mark Verheiden

DARK HORSE BOOKS
GHOST HOUSE PICTURES